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"MY lords, I think it is due to the age and country in which we live, to state what, indeed, is universally believed, that there never was a period in the history of this country, or of any other, in which the characters of persons, in an exalted station of public life, were so free from all suspicion of this species of offence (*corruption*) as at the present moment."—MR. PERCEVAL'S *Speech on the Trial of Philip Hamlin*, 22nd Nov. 1802.

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MR. MADOCKS'S MOTION.

THE Debate upon Mr. Wardle's introduction of his Charges I thought so very important, so necessary to be read by every one, and to be speedily put into a situation, where it might be easily referred to, that I deviated from my usual practice, and inserted the whole of the Report of it in the Register, as that report stood in the news-papers.—If there was good reason for doing so, upon that occasion, how much stronger is the reason for it in the present instance! The charge then was, in every point of view, of trifling consequence; indeed of no consequence at all; of a sort not worthy of a moment's attention, compared to the Charge brought forward by MR. MADOCKS, on the 11th of this month; and the Debate upon which is infinitely more interesting to us, than the fate of any, or of all the nations upon the continent of Europe, and of all the colonial possessions and commerce in the whole world. In short, after years and years of disputation, relative to the means by which men get to be Members of Parliament; after hundreds of prosecutions against those, who have, at different times, written and published relative to those means; at last, MR. MADOCKS has brought the

thing to a point; indeed to an issue; aye to a clear and unequivocal decision.—This Debate, therefore, is, beyond all comparison, the most important that I have ever had any knowledge of. It will, I hope, be read by every man that can read, in this whole kingdom. Those who take in papers containing it, should lend them to their neighbours, who do not. It should, if possible, be got by heart; and repeated once every week, in every family in the kingdom. Boys at school should have it to read, in preference to every other thing. It should be printed in all shapes and sizes; and be perpetuated in all the ways in which any act, or event, can be perpetuated. A concise statement of the charge and the decision should have a place in all the *Almanacks*; all the printed *Memorandum Books*; in *Court Kalendars*; *Books of Roads*; and, I see no harm in its having a place upon a spare leaf in the *Books of Common Prayer*. It should be framed and glazed; and hung up in Inns, Town-Halls, Courts of Justice, Market-Places, and, in short, the eye of every human creature should be, if possible, constantly fixed upon it.—I mean merely the naked fact: The bare record, unaccompanied with any comment whatever.—Nor shall I, upon this

occasion, or any other, that I can at present foresee, offer any *comment*, or *opinion*, upon any part of this Debate, as far, at least, as it relates to the Charge. I shall take it, word for word, and letter for letter, as I find it reported in the *MORNING CHRONICLE* newspaper of the 12th instant, and shall leave the reader to form his own opinion. He will, indeed, need no opinion of mine. The thing will speak for itself. It is plain matter of fact, unencumbered with any thing that can give rise to a difference to be settled by reasoning. The Charge, as will be seen below, in Mr. Madocks own words, was this: "I affirm, then, that Mr. Dick *" purchased a seat in the House of Commons for the borough of Cashel, through the agency of the Honourable Henry Wellesley, who acted for, and on behalf of, the Treasury; that, upon a recent question of the last importance, when Mr. Dick had determined to vote according to his conscience, the noble Lord, CASTLEREAGH, did intimate to that gentleman the necessity of either his voting with the government, or resigning his seat in that House; and that Mr. Dick, sooner than vote against principle, did make choice of the latter alternative, and vacate his seat accordingly. To this transaction I charge the Right Honourable Gentleman, Mr. PERCEVAL, as being privy and having connived at it. This I will ENGAGE TO PROVE BY WITNESSES AT YOUR BAR, if the House will give me leave to call them."*

—At the end of the Debate, which en-

sued upon this, the question was taken upon a motion FOR AN INQUIRY into the matter; there appears, from the report, to have been 395 members present; and, out of the 395, 85 voted for the motion, which, of course, was lost, there being *three hundred and ten* out of three hundred and ninety five, who voted *against the inquiry*—Such was the *charge*, and such the *result*: and now the reader has nothing to do, but carefully to peruse, and tenaciously to keep in mind, what was said upon both sides of this question: this interesting, this great, this all-important question; this question, which involves in it consequences of ten million times more importance to England, than the fate of all the expeditions, all the armies, and all the fleets in the world.

REPORT

OF THE DEBATE, IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

On the 11th of May, 1809, upon the Charge made by Mr. MADOCKS, against Mr. PERCEVAL and Lord CASTLEREAGH, relative to the selling of a Seat in Parliament to Mr. DICK, and to the influence exercised with Mr. DICK, as to his voting upon the recent important question.

Mr. MADOCKS began by moving that the Resolution of that House on the 10th Dec. 1779, be then read—it was read accordingly, and stated in substance, that it is "Highly criminal for any Minister or Ministers, or any other Servant of the Crown in Great Britain, directly or indirectly, to make use of the power of his office, in order to influence the election of Members of Parliament, and that an attempt to exercise that influence was an attack upon the dignity, the honour and the independence of Parlia-

ment, an infringement of the rights and the liberties of the people, and an attempt to sap the basis of our free and happy Constitution."—Mr. Madocks next moved the Resolution of that House on the 25th April, 1809, be then read—it was read accordingly, and alledged in substance, "That while it was the bounden duty of that House to maintain at all times a jealous guard upon its purity, and not to suffer any attempt upon its privileges to pass unnoticed, the attempt in the present instance (that of Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Reding), not having been carried into effect, that House did not think it then necessary to proceed to any criminal Resolutions respecting the same."

—Mr. Madocks then said, that before he proceeded to redeem the pledge he had given to the House of bringing forward the Charges he had that day to adduce, he thought it right to remind them of the opinion they had recorded of that criminal conduct, of which he then rose to accuse two of their own body. Before he entered directly into the statement of his Charge, he trusted that the indulgence of the House would allow him to make a few preliminary observations, arising out of and bearing upon the subject. In his attempt at that time to discharge his duty, he hoped that he would discharge it in a manner that became his sense of it; and in the first place, he was most anxious to abstain from every thing personal, from any thing that could give pretence for an imputation of the kind—for he could in truth say, that no such charge could be justly imputed to him. He was influenced by no personal motives, it was to measures he looked, not to individuals. He entirely overlooked the Men in the System—a system which seemed to say, that corruption was necessary to govern Englishmen—a system, which seemed to say that the English Constitution was inadequate without the aid of corruption to the purposes of good government, was insufficient without corruption for social order, foreign relations, or self-defence.

—He denied, in the name of the Constitution, the necessity of such a system, and thought that any attempt to argue its necessity was one of the strongest proofs of its dangerous and fatal tendency. It was against such a system his hostility was directed, and when he stood forth in that House the avowed enemy of corruption, he felt he had a right to claim the alliance of the hon. gentlemen opposite in the same cause, who had recently stated

that if instances of corruption did exist, it was the duty of the House to hunt them out, and drag them to light. In that feeling he shared with those hon. gentlemen, and trusted that the indignation they seemed to express at the theory of corruption would not be allayed by an exposition of the practice. He for his part, was no party man—he was bound to no man, or any set of men, except as far as he agreed with those who were anxious for the extirpation of corruption and abuses of every kind, and the restoration, in their original purity, of all the good and sound old principles of the Constitution. This was what he looked for, and what, if the House and the country were true to themselves, he did not yet despair of attaining. It was a favourite opinion with some of the rt. hon. gentlemen, that no times were less corrupt than the present—that this was, as it were, the age of purity. If such an opinion was well founded, it would be rather inconsistent with such an opinion, and not very conformable to the spirit of such times, to resort to any party expedient, in order to resist or to evade any direct charge of corruption against any individual whatever. Gentlemen, therefore, who thought so purely of present times, and public men, would no doubt, with a suitable jealousy, insist upon every charge of corruption being directly met, minutely examined into, and impartially decided upon. Upon a former night he had been accused of having been guilty of a violation of the usual courtesy of that House, in not having given the customary notice to the hon. gentlemen particularly interested in the charges he had to bring forward. To this he could only reply, by reminding the House that two or three years ago, when a Member of that House (Mr. Ashten Smith) presented the Hampshire Petition, it was objected by the gentleman charged with undue interference in the Southampton election, (Mr. Freemantle), and complained of by his friends, that no notice whatever had been given that gent. of the charge to be preferred against him—but it was at the same time contended by those now composing his Majesty's Government, that the Petition should be received, and that the allegations contained in it should be brought under the special consideration of the house. In that opinion the House concurred; thinking then, as he hoped they would now, that where the charge was of so serious nature, involving the paramount question of their own privileges, it would not become their dignity

or their justice to suffer themselves to be led away from so great an object by any light objection to mere introductory informalities. He did not wish to take any hon. gent. by surprise, nor was the charge he had to bring forward calculated to do so. It was a charge that the moment it was heard might be rebutted by an innocent man, unless it would be contended that there were degrees of corruption now so sanctioned by prescription, that that House must necessarily connive at them. He was of an opposite opinion—an opinion founded upon the history of better times. In the whole course of the history of England he no where found that *Sinecure Places and Offices, and Rotten Boroughs*, were to be considered and venerated as comprising the *palladium* of England. He read no where that the constitution was only to be preserved by the preservation of its abuses. He rather believed that it would be best secured by rooting out such abuses; and that the spirit in which a memorable attack upon corruption had originated with an hon. friend below him (Mr. Whitbread), and in which another had been conducted so lately by his hon. friend, (Mr. Wardle), was the best stay to which the constitution could look for safety and support. Serious as the charges were which had been brought in both the instances he alluded to, they were comparatively trifling, when considered in relation to that most flagitious of all abuses, by which the influence of the Treasury was exerted in returning Members to that House. In the good old times of the country, the crime was looked upon in its proper light—it was considered as fraught with the most dreadful consequences. In 1734, sir John St. Aubin declared in that House that such a system alone could give the last fatal blow to the liberties of the country, and that if the Treasury governed that House, the popular part of the constitution was gone for ever—that the people might continue to exist, but that the doors of that House would be effectually closed against their wishes and their wants. But he would read to the House the passage:—“For if a Minister should ever gain a corrupt familiarity with our Boroughs, if he should keep a register of them in his closet, and by sending down his Treasury mandates, should procure a spurious representation of the people, the offspring of his corruption, who will be at all times ready to reconcile and justify the most contradictory measures of his administration—if the mainten-

ance of his power should become the sole object of their attention, and they should be guilty of the most violent breach of Parliamentary trust, by giving the King a discretionary liberty of taxing the people without limitation or controul, the last fatal compliment they can pay the Crown—if this should ever be the unhappy circumstance of this nation, the people indeed may complain, but the doors of that place where their complaints should be heard will be forever shut against them. Let country gentlemen, by having frequent opportunities of exerting themselves, be kept active in their contention for the public good, this will raise that zeal and indignation, which will at last get the better of those undue influences, by which the Officers of the Crown, though unknown to the several Boroughs, have been able to supplant country gentlemen of great character and fortune, who live in their neighbourhood.”—The nature of that influence branched out into so many and various ways of misapplying the money taken out of the pockets of the people, that it was impossible to have an adequate idea of its magnitude and danger, or to be too vigilant in retrenching the one and guarding against the other. He had already signified his intention of taking an early opportunity of submitting to the consideration of the House the present state of certain boroughs in England. He trusted that the statement he should then submit to the House would induce them to a revision of the entire system of boroughs. He should take the liberty of advertng at present to one or two instances of this Borough influence. The first was the borough of Hastings, which consisted of only fourteen voters. The right of election being in the Corporation. This borough was the property of Mr. Millwood and his Son, who were agents for Government, and were the mayor of the town alternately. The younger Mr. Millwood was comptroller of the excise, with a salary of 1,425*l.* per annum, a place which was nearly, if not quite, a sinecure, though by the 5th of William and Mary, chapter the 30th, collectors and officers in the excise were interdicted from any interference in elections. If the sum of 1,425*l.* be multiplied by seven, it would be found that it cost the People for every Parliament 9,975*l.*—With respect to the borough of Rye there were but six electors. Mr. Thomas Lamb was agent for the Treasury, and

this gentleman was in the enjoyment of the lucrative situation of Tally-cutter, another in the Exchequer, and was also cursitor of Hampshire. This borough was under similar restrictions as the last mentioned borough of Hastings.—The next borough he should advert to was that of Cambridge. Here the agent for Government was Mr. John Mortlake, a banker, and resident at Cambridge. This gentleman was receiver-general of the Post-Office, with a salary of 800*l.* per annum, and had a deputy, a Mr. Bowden, at a salary of 500*l.* a year, though by the 9th Anne, chapter 10th, officers of the Post-Office were prohibited from interfering in elections.—The next borough he should mention was that of Queenborough. The influence of this borough was divided between the Ordnance and the Admiralty. The amount of the salaries of the places held by the freemen of the borough under the Ordnance and the Navy Boards was annually 2,368*l.* So that the public money paid to the electors of Queenborough, during a Parliament of seven years or sessions, independent of other sorts of influence, amounted to no less a sum than 14,576*l.* Not to mention that the boroughs of Westbury and New Romney were openly sold for money.—But of all the various corruptions and abuses—of all the fatal misapplications of the public money, none, he thought, so imperatively called for an immediate check as the corrupt interference to which he had already alluded, exercised by the Treasury, to procure the return of Members to that House.—This, continued Mr. Madocks, is poisoning the fountain of health. The only quarter to which we can look for the prevention or redress of other corruption. What, Sir, can be more fatal than to suffer any thing to vitiate the legislative, inquisitorial, and remedial branches of the Constitution? It has been always held, in all periods of our history, that any corruption practised by individuals to obtain seats in this House, is an offence against the Constitution, and laws have from time to time been enacted conformably to that principle; but for the Executive Power to attempt to corrupt the Legislative, has been considered as most fatal, and your Journals and Resolutions proclaim the enormity of such offence in the eye of the Constitution. Treasury influence, from the various shapes it assumes, may, in its nature, be divided into several classes—but that the most alarming and obnoxious is where public money is made instru-

mental to the return of Members to this House, either by actually buying or selling seats with money, or by applying annually part of the taxes taken out of the pockets of the people towards the keeping up a corrupt influence in the boroughs which return Members at the nomination of the Treasury, while those Members again pay a certain sum of money to the Treasury for their seats, which money is carried to a certain fund, and then doled out to carry elections in other places.—But, Sir, having enumerated these cases, which, in my opinion, ought to be submitted to a Committee to examine, sift, and regulate, I now come, Sir, to a case of what I consider as aggravated in the extreme, and one that calls for an immediate investigation at your Bar. I mean, Sir, the case of the Borough of Cashel in Ireland, in all the transactions relating to which at the last General Election, and since that time, it will be found that the Treasury have conducted themselves not only directly in the teeth of your Resolutions, but have exercised an influence beyond all parallel, and have not only violated the constitution in the most unequivocal manner, but, have inflicted signal injustice on a most honourable individual, because he had too strict a sense of propriety to vote against his conscience, and what he felt to be his right line of duty. The conduct of the hon. gent. to whom I allude, has in this instance been so strikingly correct, manly and upright, that I am confident he will meet with, as he is entitled to, the esteem of every honest man. This is not an inchoate or unfinished act. Sir, it is to this case that, for the present, I propose to call the particular attention of the House, and to conclude with a motion for hearing evidence at the Bar, in support of the statement, the facts of which I am fully prepared to prove. I have so far departed from the proceeding of the other night, though I cannot, on a revision of the precedent, find that I am not fully justified in such a course. I AFFIRM THEN, THAT MR. DICK PURCHASED A SEAT IN THIS HOUSE FOR THE BOROUGH OF CASHEL, THROUGH THE AGENCY OF THE HONOURABLE HENRY WELLESLEY, WHO ACTED FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE TREASURY; THAT UPON A RECENT QUESTION OF THE LAST IMPORTANCE, WHEN MR. DICK HAD DETERMINED TO VOTE ACCORDING TO HIS CONSCIENCE, THE NOBLE LORD (CASTLEREAGH) DID INTIMATE TO THAT GENTLEMAN, THE NECESSITY OF EITHER HIS VOTING WITH THE GOVERNMENT, OR RESIGNING HIS SEAT IN THAT HOUSE; AND THAT MR. DICK, SOONER THAN VOTE AGAINST

PRINCIPLE, DID MAKE CHOICE OF THE LATTER ALTERNATIVE, AND DID VACATE HIS SEAT ACCORDINGLY—TO THIS TRANSACTION I CHARGE THE RIGHT HONOURABLE GENTLEMAN (MR. PERCEVAL), AS BEING PRIVY AND HAVING CONNIVED AT IT; THIS I WILL ENGAGE TO PROVE BY WITNESSES AT YOUR BAR, *if the House will give me leave to call them*—if the House will permit me to do so, I am satisfied that they could not take a more direct method to remedy the abuses in the Representative System of such places as Hastings, Rye, Cambridge, Queenborough, and many other places that could be mentioned, where large annual sums were paid out of the taxes, in the maintenance of Sinecure Offices and Places to uphold the influence of the Treasury in such Boroughs.—I shall now, Sir, detain you no longer, than by again asserting the purity of my motives. They originate in my aversion to such practices, which, (to use the concluding language of the ever-memorable Hampshire Petition), with all due deference to the superior wisdom of the House, I venture to describe as calculated to bring into discredit the Government of the country, and to shake the confidence of the people in the honour and independence of the House of Commons.—I have, therefore, like the Petitioners, “felt it my bounden duty, not only to my constituents, and to my fellow-subjects, but especially to the House, to bring under their notice these outrages, as I deem them, against the liberties of the country, and I have been encouraged the more to do so by the Resolution which stands recorded in the Journals, which has been this day read at your table, and also by the language contained in the first paragraph of the Resolution which was recorded on your Journals but sixteen days ago.”

Here the hon. gent. sat down, and immediately the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose, when lord Folkestone called the right hon. gent. to order, and contended that he need not withdraw, and ought not to be heard, according to the precedent of Shepherd, until the motion of his hon. friend was before the House. Here a short discussion, as to the point of order, arose between lord Folkestone, sir John Anstruther, and Mr. Horner, when, upon the Speaker's interposition, it was agreed that Mr. Perceval and lord Castle-reagh should be severally heard in their defence, and be permitted to withdraw before the Motion was put from the Chair.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. PERCEVAL) then rose, and said that he had waited for the decision of gentlemen upon the point of order, as he felt himself naturally anxious to conform to whatever was the wish of the House, as to the form of their proceedings upon the present occasion. He however acknowledged that he was prepared to expect the decision that had been made by the Chair, as to the propriety of his then speaking, and afterwards immediately retiring. He did not wish to quarrel with or canvas whatever might have been the wish of the House, as to the manner in which he was to act in the present instance, but he thought that the usage of the House on such occasions was founded in wisdom, as the presence of the individual accused during the agitation of the charges against him might be fairly suspected to operate in a way that would fetter and restrain the freedom of the discussion itself. At the same time he felt that that Order of the House was not without its inconveniences as well as its advantages. It might be as much, if not more necessary to the just vindication of a man's innocence, to hear the close of a discussion of that sort as well as the commencement, and perhaps the progress of it as much as either; but be that as it might, the course being otherwise, it was for him now only to abide by it. And here he was free to confess, that he felt exceeding great doubt as to the line of address which it best became him in that situation to pursue. If he thought it a mere criminatory proceeding against an individual of that House, for alledged mal-practices, there he could have no doubt that the House would willingly entertain the Charge, and of course the individual would proceed at once upon his defence, meeting the charges either with direct denial, explanation of the fact, or examination into the law arising out of the fact. But with respect to the present charge, he confessed that he could not look upon it in that simple light. As well as he understood the hon. gent. he intimated in the opening of his charges, that there was still behind them a mass of other matter; and, indeed, that intimation had been sufficiently illustrated in the detailed statements entered into by the hon. gent. respecting the boroughs of Hastings, Rye, Cambridge, and Queenborough. By stating these circumstances it did appear that it was not so much the vindication of the injured honour of that House which

was the object, as that more general one of following up the pursuit of what was denominated 'a certain System.' This, it seemed, was to be a first step to general Reform. The notice with respect to the great measure itself appeared to have been withdrawn, and this proceeding to be substituted in its place. If this was so, perhaps the House would think it right to pause, before they lent their sanction to such a mode of introducing the discussion of any great public question; (*hear, hear!*) Perhaps they would feel it to be their indispensable duty not to establish a precedent that would introduce a system of inquisitorial proceedings, fraught with the most violent inroads upon all species of private and social confidence. (*Hear, hear!*) No matter through what means the charge had been elicited—no matter how sacred the confidence the discovery had violated, or how solemn the engagements it had broken through, (*hear, hear!*) at any period it would be ill advised to establish such a precedent, but particularly so at the present day. They lived in a time in which the popular appetite fed upon attacks on public men. The favourite doctrine was, that public men must be necessarily corrupt; and they were the purest patriots who prosecuted most charges against them—they lived in a time when they saw individuals raised to the highest state of popularity, and honoured with crowded tributes of the nation's gratitude and applause for prosecuting such charges. Those who were ambitious of the same flattering distinctions might think it wise to pursue the same course—no matter whatever the means, if the end could be attained. They had seen private confidence abused—they had heard of letters being seized in the unsuspecting moments of social intercourse, and had known serious Charges to be grounded upon the public disclosure of those very letters (*hear, hear!*) and they had seen those who thought it necessary to resort to such means, not to confirm, but to institute a Charge which ranks high in the esteem and veneration of the people of this country; *whether AT SUCH A TIME it would be wise to warrant such species of Charges as merely introductory to the agitation of the great question of Reform, he left it to the House to determine*; but as far as he might be allowed to judge, he rather thought that it would be more consistent with what was due from him to the House and to the Public, *if he, FOR THE PRESENT, declined putting in the plea* (he could so con-

scientiously put in), *until that House had come to a determination on the propriety of entertaining that Charge or not* (*hear, hear!*) protesting at the same time against any, the *slightest inference of his guilt from his deferring such a plea till after that decision*—*THEN would he come before them prepared, and indeed, (what he was not yet) in a manner authorised to meet that Charge, and explain, as he trusted he could do, every particular relating to the transaction upon which the charge had been grounded; and he did not despair of that explanation proving satisfactory to the House, and vindicatory of his own honour.* Before the House had come to such a decision, he should not hold it wise in any public man to enter into an explanation of the circumstances upon the one side or the other. He should say no more, but make his bow to the Chair, as was usual in such cases, and leave it with the House to determine as they in their judgment might think proper.—The right hon. gentleman then made his obeisance to the Speaker, and retired **AMIDST THE GENERAL CHEERS OF THE HOUSE.**

LORD CASTLEREAGH stated his *perfect coincidence in the line of proceeding determined upon by his right hon. friend* (Mr. Perceval), and expressed his intention of delaying his observations in defence *until the proper period arrived*, if it should be the pleasure of the House to proceed in the investigation.

MR. MADOCKS then explicitly moved, that the said Charge against the right hon. Spencer Perceval and lord visc. Castlereagh should be heard at the Bar on Monday next.

MR. TIERNEY considered it due to the House, that the hon. mover should furnish it with a clear and concise statement of that which constituted the basis of the charge. It was, in his opinion, necessary that it should be in possession of that which the motion conveyed, namely, that the House had been informed of the particulars of the accusation. Certainly the hon. mover had read a long statement, which, perhaps, was conceived by him as imparting the fullest information: but for himself he would say, that he wished for something more certain and concise than his recollection of that statement, and it was also to be considered, that since the hon. mover had read it many Members had entered the House.

THE SPEAKER stated that it would be convenient for the House to know, whether it was the intention of the hon. mover to regulate his future proceedings by the precedent in the case of Mr. Samuel Shepherd. He wished that the two Resolutions subsequent to the information being given by a member in his place, should be read.—The two Resolutions were accordingly read:—the first, where a reference was made to the protest of Mr. Shepherd, as to his innocence, and the next as to the particular boroughs, viz. Newport and Wootton Bassett, where he had been guilty of the corrupt practices, and the course pursued by the House in consequence.—From this precedent it did appear, resumed the Speaker, that after the Member made the information to the House, a motion was made to hear the accused at the bar, previous to which hearing the particulars of the charge were ordered to be given to them in writing; and, lastly, that a particular day should be fixed.

MR. WHITBREAD apprehended that, consistent with any precedent on their Journals, even with the precedent alluded to, the hon. mover was not bound to give any specific written statement of his charge against the persons affected by it. It had long been the practice to proceed to investigations of a similar nature upon oral statements, and if the hon. mover would omit the insertion of a particular day, he could not see the grounds for any valid objection to the present motion. The House had before it a recent and very remote precedent in the case of the Duke of York, and therefore he could not divine the reasons for a deviation upon that occasion. With respect to the observations of his right hon. friend (Mr. Tierney) that since the Charge was read many Members had entered the House, such an objection stood upon no Parliamentary grounds, inasmuch as when the House was met all Members were presumed to be present, and no allowance for absence upon such occasions were made, save and except that no such charges could be preferred in the absence of the persons whom they went to accuse.

MR. SECRETARY CANNING considered the recent instance in the case of the Duke of York, upon all prudential and discretionary reasons, the fittest line to be followed on this occasion. He also thought the motion so worded, as in its acquiescence neither to be unjust to the accused,

or inconvenient to those bound to investigate.

LORD FOLKESTONE, as a question of order, expressed his anxiety that the precedent in the case of Mr. Shepherd should be acted up to literally and totally, and his reason for the observation arose from seeing on the Votes of the House, in recording the notice of the present motion by his honourable friend, that the terms used were not Information but Charge. The noble lord also stated, that the desire of the right hon. gent (Mr. Tierney) for a precise statement, might be a very convenient one for the accused, still if keeping to the precedent the House would see that neither the nature of the practices, the practices themselves, or the names of the persons upon whom the influence was exerted, were detailed. Indeed, nothing more was given than a dry statement of the boroughs where the corruption was exercised.

The motion of Mr. Madocks was then read from the Chair, when Mr. Whitbread and sir Francis Burdett rose at the same moment to second it.

MR. CARTWRIGHT attributed the present motion to the same influence which had operated with the honourable member, to second certain Resolutions at a late public meeting. Against the principles attempted to be upheld that day, and as the friend to the Constitution as it then existed, he pledged himself the opponent to what was clamorously termed Parliamentary Reformation. Whilst he gave that decided opinion, he would be on all occasions the sincere supporter of all proper and efficacious correction of abuses when proved to exist.—It was the observation of a great man, "that reformation bringeth the desire of change, but that the desire of change bringeth forward reformation." The French Revolution had too lamentably illustrated that position in modern times. After the calamitous effects of that event, even if he had been friendly to Parliamentary Reform heretofore, the present awful moment he still felt convinced was the most ill-timed for entertaining the subject. That in estimating the present public opinion upon late occurrences, there existed much delusion, he would contend, and indeed he had a forcible illustration in the county town (Northampton) of the county which he had the honour to represent. In that town a requisition had been signed by seventeen

persons, to convene a meeting for thanking the hon. member (Mr. Wardle) opposite, for his exertions on a late investigation—against that a counter-requisition was signed by seventy-two inhabitants, with whose request the Chief Magistrate complied. The original requisitionists, however, had a meeting at a tavern, and there carried their vote of thanks, which they will pretend to pass as the unanimous opinion of the town.

LORD MILTON observed, that if the last speaker was even correct in the motives he attributed to the hon. gent. who brought forward the present motion, he must assure him that if such motives were justified, those who supported the motion were actuated by inducements wholly different. For instance, if he thought that the present motion tended to the success of the question of Parliamentary Reform, he would have been the first to oppose it, because he was free to say that from its adoption *he could not foresee any practical benefit.* He still was impressed with the necessity of correcting public abuses, and none more imperatively called for correction, as none were more dangerous, than *pulpable and evident interference of the King's Ministers in obtaining the return of Members to that House.* In giving such an opinion, and whilst he voted for the motion in part, he still, in whatever way it was decided, *would not think one jot the worse of either of the rt. hon. gentlemen accused, or that they were in any degree more criminal than all former governments.* The evil ought, however, to cease, and any *prospective remedy* would have his support. As leading to that object he was anxious to refer the consideration of this charge either to a Parliamentary Commission or to a Select Committee, convinced that the greatest injury had evinced itself by giving a Parliamentary strength to a government which did not possess the confidence of the People. The noble lord concluded by moving as an Amendment, That in place of the words "at the bar," the said Charge be referred to a Select Committee.

SIR CHARLES MORGAN declared his decided opposition to the motion. He considered that the moment for the House, if it consulted its own dignity, and the permanent interests of the country, to make a stand against all the efforts of popular clamour. He guarded the House against at all acceding to a system, which had for its object to degrade and to vilify all pub-

lic men, to make every person of that description its victim, and to consider no other man pure who had not been filtered through the purifying vessel of modern patriotism. —The honourable member's voice fell so considerably, that it was impossible to hear the remainder of his observations.

SIR J. ANSTRUTHER stated that the present motion was an attack equally against all executive Governments, both past and to come. There was a great attack now-a-days against the influence and attachments of party; but still he strongly suspected that there was in contemplation another party to which the hon. mover may belong, but of which he was not so solicitous to be fully informed, whose object was to level down all public men to their own very humble state. If there was, as he strongly suspected, a party having such views, sure he was that the present motion was well calculated to promote their object. The ball was to be opened with the borough of Cashel, but the hon. mover explicitly told us that it was but a part of his intended investigation, and, of course, the House had no means of ascertaining where he intended to stop. Why was it not informed of all that was meant to be done with that Committee? Did the hon. mover propose the present motion as a new gratification of the public appetite for scandal, and thus obtain a greater number of converts to his scheme of Parliamentary Reform? To excite that disgust and disregard, dissension, and perhaps the detestation of that House, which would ultimately go rather to destroy, than to reform Parliament. If abuses exist, let the correction be prospective, but let it not be introduced upon a retrospective process, with a view of making that criminal which was not probably criminal before; and upon what inducement? The presumed information of a member in his place. To inform, in his apprehension, meant to convey information, and he would ask, was there in the statement of the hon. mover any ground upon which the most subordinate magistrates would proceed. If such undefined accusations were sanctioned in that House, then with equal propriety must it prepare itself to hear repeated the idle conversations of every club room (*Hear! hear! from the Ministerial benches*); and for what he knew, the very information upon which the House was now called to proceed might have originated from such a source. If such was the fact, he would say, that at

the man who uttered such a statement did by such conduct violate every principle of honour and of confidence, he would not give to such a man credit at the bar. Good God! were all the ties of private confidence and private virtue to be cleft in pieces by the rascality of a few individuals, exerting every effort to gratify that public scandal which was by themselves excited. To the legitimate and serious opinion of the public he trusted that House would ever lend a deep and prompt attention; but he admonished it how it yielded even for a moment to that appeal, which was nothing more than public clamour. The House should keep its even and steady course, unbiassed either by the influence of the Court or the turbulence of the People; and by such conduct, if it failed to obtain, it still would have the consciousness of deserving the approbation of a grateful and high-minded people.

MR. CURWEN could not suppose that, after the 25 last years of *uncomplained of sacrifice*, any part of the people of this kingdom looked to *any change other than a reform of abuses*. With respect to the question of Parliamentary Reform, he had been formerly friendly to it; but he was willing to admit his opinion that the present was not the most favourable season for bringing it into discussion. He was as great an advocate as any man in that House for the Constitution, but he was also anxious to get rid of its abuses. The laws of the land and the statutes of the legislature held no dubious language upon that head, but all directed their provisions to weed out or to prevent public corruptions. Whatever might be his preference to a Parliamentary Commission, he considered that, after the hard measure of justice which, in the same stage of the proceeding, had been dealt out to the Duke of York, the House was bound to follow the same course on the present occasion. He wished that the hon. mover had deferred the motion until he had seen how a certain measure, tending to prevent such practices, had been received by the House. As he had not done so, in consistence with the vote which, on a late occasion he had given, he would also support the proposition of the hon. mover; although he thought it the true system now to throw a veil over what was past, and sincerely guard against the recurrence.

MR. BIDDULPH briefly supported the motion.

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT observed that the character of the House was most materially concerned in the question now brought before it, and that a more important subject could not engage its attention. The objections to the motion, he contended, were not founded either in principle or precedent. Supposing the point of principle, however, out of the question, he affirmed that the motion of his hon. friend was perfectly consistent with the most sound and approved parliamentary precedents. He had written down a great variety of precedents, in order to prove the accuracy of this assertion, which, however, from the turn which the debate had taken, he did not think it necessary to state. The hon. baronet contended that they used a most unwarrantable liberty with the inquisitorial powers of that House who could ascribe any motives to his honourable friend except a conscientious and manful discharge of his duty. It had been decided in the House of Commons, that that House was bound to receive information upon a subject of this nature, and to act upon that information, even upon common report. How much more was the House bound to act upon that which was known by most and believed by all? (*Hear, Hear!*) He would be glad to hear any gentleman on the other side get up, and lay his hand upon his heart, and say that he did not believe the existence of such practices as those which were now charged—practices which tended to give the most mortal stab to the character of that House. If it was possible for any gentleman there to defend such things, as to contend that these practices, which were pregnant with destruction to the Constitution, formed part of the Constitution itself, then he must say that Bonaparte had a better ally within these walls than he had any where else, (*Loud cries of hear, hear! from the ministerial side of the House.*) He was not surprised to be met with a "hear, hear!" from men professing the same principles which had brought other nations to destruction—other nations, the principal object of whose governments had been to *subdue their own subjects instead of their foreign enemies*. He desired the gentlemen who were so ready to call out "hear, hear," to shew him any Government which had of late been subverted by its own subjects, except through that apathy which the errors of such Governments had created as to the career of a foreign enemy.—The honourable baronet further observed, that what he and

those who were actuated by the same principles demanded, *was nothing more than the Constitution—and they desired reform not for the subversion but for the establishment of the Constitution.* The noble lord (Milton) seemed to think that as this was an established practice—a sort of trade which had been regularly carried on by every Government for a long period, he should *not think the less* of the Ministers now accused, even though the charge should be proved. He perhaps agreed with the noble lord in that sentiment. But at the same time what inference the country would draw from such an opinion, the friends of corruption ought well to consider. They ought to beware of having a rooted conviction established in the country, *that corruption was become so common with respect to Seats in that House, that it had ceased to be there regarded as an offence; or would they with sound of trumpet through the land proclaim, that not to be corrupt is the shame!* But, if they meant to deny the existence of such corruption, *let them come to the proof.*—It was impossible, surely, consistently to maintain that corruption was not mischievous, for the Committees appointed by the House itself, *had constantly been exposing and reprobating such abuses.*—The principles which he had always possessed, did not rest merely on any theoretical conclusions of his own, *but were to be found in the Statute Books.* His object was to restore the Constitution to that purity which it ought to have, and which it was understood to possess in theory. All he now said was that if one of the organs by which the Constitution was administered was corrupt, it was impossible that the Constitution could be sound in practice, whatever it might be in theory. A charge of Corruption in procuring returns to that House had been brought against two of its Members. If the House refused to proceed to inquire into the truth of the allegations, the manifest conclusion would be, what had been already hinted at, that the offence was too common to be considered as a ground of punishment. One gentleman had said that exclusive demerit rested not with the accused, and they therefore ought not to be exposed. That, however, was not a sort of defence that ought to be satisfactory, or that would be satisfactory to the country. With regard to the bill to prevent the Sale of Seats in that House, proposed to be introduced by the hon. gent. near him (Mr. Curwen) he doubted whether its effect would not be to prevent the

carrying on of the trade by individuals, and to throw it entirely into the hands of the Treasury. But the state of the question was this—either we had a Representation, or we had not. If we had not a real Representation of the people, we ought to procure it as soon as possible, for no succedaneum could answer the purpose, whatever means might be devised for propping a corrupt and rotten system. The honourable baronet on the floor (Sir J. Anstruther) had, in attempting to give a definition of the word “information,” expressed a doubt whether he understood the English language. But whether he understood the English language or not, the hon. baronet seemed to have been very well acquainted with the feelings of the House. He appeared to have had a notion that the feeling of the House was against inquiry; and the cheers with which his speech had been received was a strong proof of the accuracy of his opinion on that point. Much had been said with a view to shew that the charge was not properly preferred. He, however (Sir F. B.) thought there could be no doubt that the charge was in itself founded upon the most constitutional principles, and brought forward in a way that was warranted by many parliamentary precedents.

MR. D. GIDDY thought that those who were so loud in the condemnation of corruption did not sufficiently distinguish between corruption, properly so called, and the influence which property would always have in every well regulated society. The influence of property was one which ought to prevail as well as that of ability. He would always be glad to have some eminent lawyers in the House—to see gentlemen of the Army and Navy there. The Landed Interest ought unquestionably to have its full weight, but he saw no reason why those who had their fortunes in chattels or money should be excluded. He saw no reason why some of the Directors of the East India Company should not possess seats in that House, since they had important interests to defend. (*Hear, hear!* in one quarter, and a *laugh* in another). There never was a question of importance discussed in that House, without a proof that the interests affected by it had some persons to represent them. Mr. D. G. also remarked, that under this system the country, in spite of all the wars in which it had been engaged, had flourished. Every town had been improved; new harbours had been con-

structed; and manufactures and trade increased together. These were blessings not to be rashly risked for any fanciful schemes of reform (*Hear, hear, from Mr. Windham*). At the same time, where corruption was proved to exist, he would concur in adopting the proper means to check it, always, however, distinguishing between corruption, and that just and proper influence which ought to be inseparable from property.

MR. TIERNEY expressed his wish that the charge against Mr. Perceval should be separated from that preferred against Lord Castlereagh; and observed, that in the case of Shepherd, the charge had been given in writing, and he hoped the hon. gent. would give in his charge in this way, that gentlemen might clearly understand upon what they were to vote. He thought this question had, strictly speaking, nothing to do with Parliamentary Reform, for the offence was one which might be committed under any circumstances. The charge against Mr. Perceval and Mr. Wellesley was so vague, that he would be ashamed to receive it in its present shape. But as to the charge against Lord Castlereagh, that certainly deserved attention, both from its being more distinctly laid, and from the circumstance that 167 members of that House had already pronounced that noble lord to have been guilty of a breach of its privileges.—With regard to Parliamentary Reform, Mr. T. said, that he was as warmly attached to that as he had ever been. It was one of the greatest advantages of the Constitution, that when things went wrong the House had the power of making them better. He, however, was perfectly aware of the inconvenience of the time which had been chosen to bring forward the question—chiefly because it did not appear to him that either the sense of the Country or of Parliament was decidedly in its favour. The question had been raised merely by the business of the Duke of York; and he believed that there were many who supported the cry for Parliamentary Reform who had no specific view of the subject which they themselves desired to attain—(*Hear, hear!*) What many, he believed, understood by Parliamentary Reform was a relief from the weight of the taxes. He must have little associated with the various classes of society in this country, who was not convinced of the deep-rooted complaints which were called forth by the burthens of the taxes, and the manner in

which they were collected. If any one would for a moment consider the weight of all the other taxes, added to that of the Income Tax, he would not be surprised that numbers were disposed to listen to any proposal which promised an alleviation of that burthen. There was no disposition any where for overturning the establishments of the constitution; but the people readily listened to those who from good or bad motives proposed Reform, because the idea was to encourage the hope that by this Reform they would be in some measure at least relieved from the pressure of taxation. But that was a sense in which he did not wish Reform to be understood. Nor would he be in the least accessary to the propagation of such a delusion. The discussion of the subject of Reform, however, did not at all call for a question like that now before the House. If they intended to bring the subject of Reform before the House, why did they not do it directly? Why should they think it necessary to begin by attempting to degrade all public men and every government?—The late Mr. Pitt, Mr. T. observed, had gone farther in his project than the mere prevention of the sale and purchase of seats, for he proposed that the burgage tenures should be bought up, as they had subsequently been in Ireland. But among all the schemes of Parliamentary Reform of which he had heard, he had never known of a commencement like that which the House was now called upon to adopt. He knew that a wonderful degree of popularity might at present be acquired, by saying that one belonged to no party. But of this kind of popularity he was far from being ambitious, because without being a party man it would be impossible to accomplish any great object, and because he was persuaded that the country had derived more advantages from party warfare in that House, than from any other circumstance whatever. He therefore wished for none of the popularity that must result from his being no party man. He was a zealous party man, and only wished he were a better. But the gentlemen themselves who had set up this cry of "no party," after all constituted a party. They attended and voted together on questions which some considered as of minor importance, but as to those which were generally considered as of the greatest consequence, such as the fate of armies, they did not think it necessary to give any vote, and all stayed away. They proceeded in all this as if

they were acting under a leader—and a leader, be he who he may, they either had or must soon be compelled to appoint.—One of the most remarkable characteristics of this party was the attention which it paid to stage effect, (*Hear! hear!*) in carefully concealing the ultimate object at which it aimed. (*Hear! hear!*) Of the two other parties, they gave the preference to the gentlemen on the other side; but yet the only result of that preference was a charge against two of them by which they were compelled to leave the House. (*Hear! hear!*)—But why did they think Ministers better than those who sat near him? The reason very probably was, that a weak Administration might be more valuable to those who had such views. For all this he might expect to be subject to reproaches. The usual cry would be renewed, “When any motion is made against corruption, the parties immediately understand each other, and join against it.” There was, indeed, one charge against him, a very heavy one in their opinion, which he could not deny. He had certainly been in office—But these gentlemen referred the House to the Reports of their Committees in support of their assertions, that corruption prevailed in every department of the state. Did they really believe it possible, that, in the management of so many complicated concerns, and of so large an expenditure, no mal-practices should at any time occur? It could not be done; and hence the advantage of appointing Committees from time to time. The abuses were not, however, greater perhaps, than might have been expected; and these being pointed out in the Reports, the House had an opportunity of applying the remedies. Many improvements in the conduct of various departments had been the consequence of this mode of proceeding. Mr. T. then observed that he differed widely from the hon. bart. with regard to the bill of his hon. friend (Mr. Curwen) behind him. He thought the bill would do a great deal of good; but if the hon. bart. (Burdett) was of opinion, that the security which it proposed against the sale of seats was not sufficient, he himself ought to attend and propose a better. It was sufficient for him, however, that Parliament had agreed to the principle, that such trafficking in seats ought to be abolished. He saw no reason for going into the past; and he asked, whether any thing could be more unjust than to turn round upon two gentlemen, whose conduct had not been attended with any peculiar aggravation. Mr.

T. however, acknowledged that some reform there must be, and the more gradual he would be the better pleased. *Something however, must be done to remove any injurious impressions which the people had of that House.* The landed interest ought for obvious reasons, to have the greatest weight in the House, though it ought not to be all in all. The monied interest ought to have considerable influence. But at the same time it was proper that mere money should not procure a seat in that House, and give rise to speculations which no one could see without pain. But it would be *great injustice to render a few individuals the victims of a system which did not commence with them.* He concluded by saying, that he would move an Amendment to the Motion, with a view to exclude that part of the charge relating to Mr. Perceval and Mr. Wellesley, and to retain only that which related to lord Castlereagh.

A short conversation then took place between Mr. Tierney and the Speaker, respecting the proper mode in point of form of introducing this Amendment.

MR. WHITBREAD expressed his astonishment to hear the measure of Parliamentary Reform objected to by his right hon. friend in point of time, the more so as that objection was grounded upon the same arguments which his rt. hon. friend, he, and others, had on former occasions to encounter from the other side of the House. With regard to the public meetings, from which declarations of opinion had been published upon the subject of the decision of the House relative to the Conduct of the Duke of York, *he maintained the right of the people to express their opinion upon any public question*, asserting that there were numbers among the public who were as competent to form a correct opinion upon that or any other question, as the Members of that House. To think otherwise on the part of the House, he would consider *as an indication of arrogance and folly.* The people had the whole of the evidence before them with respect to the transaction alluded to, and upon that evidence they thought proper to come to a conclusion directly contrary to that of the House. Was it to be wondered at then, that such a conclusion, and the considerations connected with it, should have induced the mind of the country to conceive that all was not right in that House, and that some reform in the representation was necessary. As to the attack

which it was alledged was systematically made upon public men, he wished to know *whether serious disposition to very gross attack did not prevail against those who were anxious to expose and punish abuses, even more than against those who were supposed to profit by the existence of such abuses.* He remembered, not many nights ago, to have heard it stated in that House by an hon. gent. that he would rather be Mrs. Clarke with all her vices, than pursue the conduct of the hon. gent. who brought her forward. This he offered as a specimen of what those were liable to who struggled upon the side of the people, and as some counterpoise to the murmuring of those gentlemen who felt *so very indignant at accusations, accompanied by an offer of proof, which still they would not suffer the House to receive.* So that although their pride was hurt, and their character impeached, they would not allow their principles to be vindicated. Although he supported the motion, as he would any measure connected with Reform, or the correction of abuses, there were two points in which he differed from those so pointedly alluded to by his right hon. friend: for he neither disclaimed party, nor did he profess that extraordinary purity, which was described as a cloak for mischievous designs. Giving every man credit for all the integrity that he could consistently claim, he believed there was no public man whatever whose motives were not of a mixed nature. His own motives he confessed to be of that character, and still he believed himself as well disposed to do good as any other man—and in the prosecution of that good he would not suffer his mind to be warped by popularity either within or without doors. Parliamentary Reform he conceived to be the greatest good the country could experience, and therefore he sought for it. He thought it necessary in order to prevent convulsion; but he never did think, nor did he ever say, that it would operate like enchantment, as a panacea for all evils. He never was deluded by theories, but looked for that Reform only which was sought for by so many great men, by Mr. Blackstone, by Dr. Paley, by Mr. Fox, by Mr. Pitt, and many others. If these great men could now be communicated with, if one of them at least were enabled to offer his advice, sure he was that that wise man, whose principles he contracted at his outset in political life, would strongly recommend the conduct he was now pursuing.—Several gentlemen, particularly about the Mi-

nisterial Bench, had, he recollected, professed their resolution to wage war with corruption; but if such a case as that then before the House did not rouse them to act, he could not conceive when they would give battle. Here were two Ministers of State accused of receiving money for a Seat in that House, calling upon the person purchasing such seat to vacate, because he would not vote against his conscience. *How the money arising out of the purchase had been disposed of the House was yet to learn.* The Chancellor of the Exchequer had talked of the violations of social confidence in the disclosure of this transaction. But in fact there was no social confidence in the case on the part of his honourable friend. The information he received he laid, as was his duty, before the House, and it was for the House to decide how it would act for the preservation of its own honour and character. But it was pretended, that as there was such a disposition to abuse public men, it was here proper to make a stand against inquiry.—What, in such a flagrant case? The present ministers would not determine upon such a stand in the instance of the Hampshire Election. They would then prosecute Mr. Freemantle with the utmost rigour for writing a letter to a single voter: and yet now they would claim complete impunity for the Chancellor of the Exchequer and lord Castlereagh, who had sold a seat to a Member upon certain terms to obtain his vote, and afterwards turned him out of his seat because he would not vote against his judgment. *If such a case as this were overlooked, the House might as well, in his opinion, expunge its Journals, burn its Statutes, and blot out the Constitution.* But, gentlemen asserted that there was no precedent for these retrospective inquiries—Did they forget that, in one of the most corrupt periods of our history, at the close of sir Robert Walpole's Administration, a Committee was appointed to inquire into the abuses of that Administration for no less than ten years back? In these gentlemen, who voted against lord Castlereagh upon a former night for an act of corruption, which was only inchoate, he thought it would be exceedingly inconsistent to vote against this motion, where the act was alledged to be complete.—The opinion in favour of Reform he believed to be much more general than it had been at any former period, and it was very easily to be accounted for. *The result of the Investigation respecting the Duke of York, the rejection of the Reversion Bill, and the vote in favour of lord*

Castlereagh, formed strong additional reasons for discrediting the composition of that House, and naturally multiplied the advocates for Reform. Still he thought the sentiment in support of Reform, when it was last discussed, would have been much louder, more universal and effective, if it had not been for the extraordinary exercise of the influence of the Crown. This exercise was most strongly exemplified in the case of the celebrated Robert Burns, the poet, as appeared from a letter of his published since his death. Burns was an exciseman, and having, by the liberality of his sentiments, incurred the imputation, the surveyor called upon him by order of the Commissioners. Burns disclaimed the charge; but although under the apprehension of being sent with his family to seek for bread, for the produce of his works was insufficient to support a sick brother, he ventured to say that the corruption of the Legislature, and the extending influence of the Executive, boded no good to the country. Upon which the Surveyor observed authoritatively—"It is your business Sir, to act, and not to think—be silent and obedient." (*A laugh at the back of the Ministerial benches.*) Mr. Whitbread reprobated such levity. Sure he was that those who could laugh at such an insolent observation must be very much inferior indeed, in genius and worth, to the man to whom it was addressed.—It had become a fashion, he perceived of late, to call upon gentlemen, rather improperly as he thought, for a profession of faith upon certain political tenets.—For himself, however, he had no objection to make the profession required. He certainly was not an advocate for the exclusion of all placemen from seats in that House. Although he knew there were many who had no right to be there, he would rather prefer the presence of Ministers, in order that they might be confronted with their accusers, that they might account for their conduct, and display their views to the House. He was also adverse to the idea, that it was of no consequence by whom the affairs of the Government were administered. It appeared to him quite preposterous, even if corruption were not removed or diminished, that it would not be material to consider by whom the power of the country should be directed. What, that if the vessel were in a crazy state, and its sails rent, it mattered not what pilot was at the helm!—There was not perhaps a man in society who felt more horror at the idea

of revolution than he did. His all was at stake. He enjoyed many comforts, and valuing the British Constitution, he would not risk its loss for any untried system—still less for a Republic. He was no admirer of Republican Governments. They had both in ancient and modern times been corrupt and arbitrary. Even in Athens, supposed the purest Republic, corruption pervaded the whole community, the people being bribed by the orators, and the orators bribed by foreign states, Demosthenes himself not being free from the imputation; but aversion to the idea of revolution must utterly blindfold the judgment of any man, who could suppose that such an evil was likely to arise, if lord Castlereagh were not granted impunity for a two-fold abuse of patronage, and if such a case as that before the House were not overlooked: the notion was perfectly ridiculous.—The hon. gent. concluded with exhorting the House to guard the country against the fate which all the corrupt Governments of Europe had experienced—to conciliate the people to their Government, and not to reduce England to the state in which Sicily now was, where the conduct of its Government had rendered the people indifferent to the fate which seemed to menace them.

Mr. B. BATHURST saw no reason why it should be assumed that he, and the gentlemen who voted with him in the majority upon the Duke of York's case, had not come to a correct and conscientious conclusion. That they did so he had no doubt would be the prevalent opinion of the country, when the present ferment subsided, and gentlemen had an opportunity of explaining the grounds of their conduct to their constituents. As to the question of Reform, and the extraordinary professions of purity by which it was recommended from certain quarters, he begged the House to examine those professions. It would be recollected, that of all the corruptions which had occurred, or were ever reported to have occurred, at popular elections—even the story of Punch at Shaftesbury sunk into insignificance, when compared to the creation of the hundreds of voters for the Isleworth Mill (*Hear! hear! from the Ministerial benches.*) The right hon. gent. expressed his resolution to oppose this motion, or any other of a similar nature, which promised to give food and fuel to that popular ferment which it should be the object of the House to allay.

LORD COCHRANE said, his principal reason for supporting Parliamentary Reform upon old constitutional principles was, as he had stated at a late popular meeting, in order to set ministers free from those discussions, which occupied too much of their time, and rendered them unable to attend to the important business of their several departments, the neglect of which he had too often witnessed on foreign stations. If the people were fairly represented in that House, his opinion was, that there would be less of captious opposition or tedious controversy; corruption would be set aside; *opposition would have no abuses to point out; and ministers, being disengaged from the task of defending such things, would be able to devote their minds more profitably for the state, to the objects he had before alluded to.*

MR. PONSONBY said that the allusions to Popular Meetings and to Parliamentary Reform were quite irrelevant to the question before the House. As to Reform, he would not, as he had before said, deliver any opinion on that subject incidentally, nor until it was brought before the House for discussion. The question before the House involved a charge against two of the Ministers relative to the Sale of a Seat in that House.—*But he would appeal to all who heard him, whether many Seats were not sold, and that being notorious, he never could persuade himself to take advantage of such a circumstance in a political adversary for the purpose of running him down.* There was, perhaps, no public man in the world, with regard to whom he felt such deep resentment as against one of the persons implicated by this accusation (Castlereagh). He disliked him for his conduct in Ireland, in that country whose prosperity he had marred—whose population he had persecuted—whose consequence he had degraded—whose independence he had extinguished by practices, into the detail of which he would not then enter. But the more he felt those sentiments with respect to that noble lord, the more he strove to controul his feelings in order to correct his judgment. He had voted against the noble lord (Castlereagh) the other night, because the noble lord himself confessed his guilt. But in that case he could not consider the application to him by Mr. Dick to be any thing more than the application of one friend to another to facilitate his attainment of a seat in Parliament. *Such things were known to be done by hundreds, and why, therefore, inquire into this trans-*

action. The practice of trafficking in Seats had, he admitted, *BECAME AS GLARING AS THE NOON-DAY SUN*, and the excess had so much scandalized the country, that it became necessary to interfere. That interference had taken place in the Bill to be brought in by his hon. friend (Mr. Curwen); and this measure would, he trusted, be rendered by the wisdom of the House *a complete remedy for the evil complained of.* It might be said, that he was delicate upon this subject, lest some of his *own friends* might be detected in such proceedings. *Perhaps some of his friends were so guilty,* he could not say, but for himself he could declare, that he had never paid a shilling to any man for his vote. But the practice complained of was so long, and so universally known to have prevailed, that he could not reconcile it to his notions of liberality and justice to select these two individuals as the victims.

LORD FOLKESTONE thought it must appear rather inconsistent that gentlemen should support the Bill of the hon. gent. (Mr. Curwen), if the practice it proposed to correct were not deemed blameable, and if that practice were so blameable, how could the acquittal of the two ministers referred to in the motion be justified. But the approbation of both parties in the House, with regard to the bill alluded to, was somewhat new and surprising. He never heard of that approbation until this night, and he hoped it was not effected to answer that occasion, to create a diversion in favour of the accused. But supposing this bill passed that House, *it might be thrown out in the lords, and then what a dilemma would the House be placed in, if it overlooked the subject of the accusation.* When he first mentioned such shameful practices as this charge referred to, he remembered that he was met by a cheer of disapprobation from the other side, and was challenged to proof. Yet now gentlemen were not ashamed to avow that these disgraceful transactions were as notorious as the noon-day sun, and that was admitted without proof. When he brought forward his motion for inquiry, it was objected to upon the ground that his charges were too general. And now this motion was resisted because it was too specific. So that no form of proceeding could suit those gentlemen, because, in plain English, *it was not their interest to investigate any charge.*—If not, he would be glad to know who were the greater enemies to public character—*they who would mark out and exclude improper*

persons from public station, or they who would unblushingly resist all inquiry, upon the avowed ground that corruption was so extensive, that no individual charge could be admitted? Could gentlemen be surprised if, after such an avowal from both sides, the public should be distrustful of the honour and character of that House? Such distrust did exist, and it was notorious. He deprecated the idea of supposing that it was to be removed by any other means than by inquiry, and proving it to be unfounded. *Resisting inquiry only served to strengthen the influence and to extend the limits of suspicion, by comprehending all those who connected themselves with such resistance.* The noble lord concluded with declaring his resolution to oppose the Amendment, and to vote for the original motion.

MR. WINDHAM entered into a variety of ingenious arguments in support of his opinion upon the subject of Reform. There were many things of the nature referred to in this motion, which were, in fact, coeval and coexistent with the constitution itself, and they had "*grown with its growth and strengthened with its strength.*" These things were, in fact, so interwoven with the constitution, and that constitution itself was such a complicated system, that no wise statesman would venture to tear them out, lest he should take out something very valuable along with them. *The constitution was like the elements of the air we breathe, some of which were poisonous, and yet if those elements were extracted the earth would not be habitable.* When gentlemen talked of the theory of the Constitution, they seemed to forget that those corruptions, as they were called, formed part of that theory, for they were to be found coexisting with the Constitution in all times, even in the best of times—even in the days of the Great Chatham, as he was termed. That noble lord, no doubt, made use of this species of traffic, and upon the principles stated, namely, as a part of the defence of government. He must have made use of corruption. For, in fact, there was corruption in the country from top to bottom, and from bottom to top, differing only in this respect, that it was more dense at bottom, and became purer as you advanced to the top. That when you came to the top you found no corruption, it would be preposterous to assert. Men were, as his hon. friend observed, influenced by mixed motives, and he did not know himself a human creature who denied it. Ambition had his full

operation on public men, and a sort of corruption was sometimes necessary to gratify it. But he could never believe that any thing low, such as the *embezzlement of money*, was among the higher order of public men. Indeed the commotion created by any such charge, was, in itself, proof that the thing was *unlikely*. To guard against embezzlement on the part of agents, was impossible in the extensive expenditure of our revenues, and therefore any charge against any minister upon that ground would be totally unjust. If a man, in his own private family, could not guard against prodigality and mismanagement, surely such a guard could not be looked for, or entirely relied upon, in disposing of the resources of a great nation. The hon. gent. expressed his intention to vote against the motion.

LORD ARCHIBALD HAMILTON spoke strongly on the opposite side.

MR. WILBERFORCE believing that the proposed investigation would terminate in the exculpation of the two hon. members, still was of opinion, that the House should entertain the proposition of the hon. mover. The public confidence and support were at all times desirable, but at a moment of danger from without and dissatisfaction from within, that House was bound to pursue a strictly just and honourable course. *To refuse the motion of that night was to afford a strong illustration of the necessity of that Reform, which it was idly supposed could be best checked by a determination not to enter upon inquiry.*—Viewing the case in a moral view—[The cries of *Question! question! Withdraw! withdraw!* were so frequent and continued, that it was impossible to hear the remaining observations of the rt. hon. gent.]—only that he concluded with his determination of supporting the motion of the hon. gent. (Mr. Madocks).

MR. CANNING, in a very eloquent harangue, called upon the House that night TO MAKE A STAND AGAINST THE ENCROACHMENTS OF THE FACCIOUS, and to reflect upon the system of which this motion formed a part, dexterously introduced as it was. To-night it was called upon to make an *immolation* of two upon his side of the House, and, perhaps, if successful now, it would on the morrow be summoned to *sacrifice two stately victims* from the other. (*Hear, hear!*) He argued

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the right of canvassing the motives and appreciating the conduct of public meetings, when such meetings were protruded upon the judgment of that House, as speaking the popular will, although never legitimately convened, either according to the spirit or the forms of the constitution. The rt. hon. gent., although persuaded that exculpation would be the consequence of inquiry into the conduct of his two rt. hon. colleagues, of one of whom (Mr. Perceval) he would say that *his private virtue and public integrity were acknowledged by his friends, and admitted even by his political opponents to be without a stain*) still he thought the House bound to negative the motion, as well for its avowed object as for the consequences to which it would lead. He then concluded with a *florid panegyric upon the House of Commons*, to whatever causes, whether arrangement or chance, it owed its present constitution.

MR. HUTCHINSON protested against the doctrine of that night, which posterity would reprobate. When it should hear that a House of Commons was found so debased as to acknowledge the existence of corruption in its formation, and justify the existence of it. (*Cries of withdraw, withdraw, and violent uproar*). It was at least consistent for those, said the hon. member, to *drown*, if possible, the discussion of men who opposed them. Convinced, as they must be, that such conduct as they pursued that night, could neither bear inquiry, argument, or the touchstone of common integrity.

MR. WM. SMITH thought the House bound to reflect upon the alledged interference of lord Castlereagh, with the vote of Mr. Dick upon a *judicial question* of high importance. [*No, No, from the Ministerial benches*]. If the fact be not so, why not inquire? [*No, No, from the same quarter*]. I repeat the words—if the fact be not so, *why not inquire?* and if with the question thus put to you, you refuse to inquire, *the country will not fail to form its own decision.*

MR. PETER MOORE stated, that on a former occasion, when he opposed himself to the general motion of a noble lord (Folkestone), because it did not state some definite grounds, he had then the honour of being *cheered* by his Majesty's Ministers and their adherents. Their objection then was,—your motion is *too wide-wasting*, too indefinite, and therefore we oppose it; but give us something in a tangi-

ble shape and we will withdraw our resistance? *Here then was something in a tangible shape; here was specific corruption offered to be proved* against two members of their body, in confidential situations under the Crown. How has it been received? *Shame to say, its existence has not only been admitted from time immemorial, but even justified from both sides of the House.* Let the House cautiously reflect how it sends abroad such principles, sanctioned by their decision. In such an attempt to vindicate the character of the two rt. hon. gentlemen, they will fail to retrieve them, whilst they sacrifice to eternity the honour, the credit, and the character of the House of Commons.

MR. MADOCKS made a brief reply, defended the consistency of his public life and the purity of his motives. He felt impelled to the course by the sense of public duty, *from which, not even the conduct of that night should succeed in warping him.* A right hon. gent. (Mr. Windham) had confessed, that corruption existed from the top to the bottom of the state. He was sorry to agree with the right hon. gent. on this point. It did, indeed exist most generally. Its universality and ubiquity were frightful, and reminded him of Virgil's figure of Fame:

‘Ingrediturque solo, et caput inter nubila condit.’

The Question being loudly called for, strangers were ordered to withdraw. We understand that the two Amendments were negatived without a division. The House then divided on the original motion, as proposed by Mr. Madocks,—when the numbers were:—

NOES	-	-	310
AYES	-	-	85

MAJORITY AGAINST INQUIRY 225

LIST OF THE MINORITY.

Adams, Charles	Cochrane, Lord
Althorp, Viscount	Coombe, Harvey Christ.
Antonie, William Lee	Cooke, Bryan
Astley, Sir J. H.	Creevey, Thomas
Babington, Thomas	Curwen, John Christian
Barham, Joseph Foster	Dickenson, William
Baring, Alexander	Dundas, Charles
Biddulph, R. Myddleton	Fellowes, Hon. Newton
Bradshaw, Hon. Ang. Cav.	Fitzpatrick, Rt. Hon. Rd.
Brand, Hon. Thomas	Forbes, Viscount
Brownie, Anthony	Giles, Daniel
Burdett, Sir Francis	Gower, Earl
Byng, George	Grant, Charles
Calvert, Nicholson	Grattan, Rt. Hon. Henry

Halsey, Joseph
 Hamilton, Lord Archibald
 Hbbert, George
 Haywood, William
 Horner, Francis
 Howard, Henry
 Howorth, Humphry
 Hughes, William Lewis
 Hutchinson, Hon. C. H.
 Hussey, William
 Jekell, Joseph
 Jones, Thomas
 King, Sir John Dashwood
 Knapp, George
 Lamb, Hon. William
 Lambton, Ralph John
 Langton, William Gore
 Lemon, Sir William
 Lemon, John
 Lloyd, Sir Edw. Pryce
 Lytleton, Hon. Wm. H.
 McDonald, James
 Markham, John
 Martin, Henry
 Maule, Hon. William
 Mildmay, Sir Harry
 Miller, Sir Thomas
 Milner, Sir W. Mordaunt
 Milton, Lord Viscount
 Moore, Peter

Mosley, Sir Oswald
 Mostyn, Sir Thomas
 North, Dudley
 Northey, William
 Ossulston, Lord
 Parnell, Henry
 Pelham, Hon. Ch. And.
 Percy, Earl
 Porchester, Lord
 Pym, Francis
 Romilly, Sir Samuel
 Savage, Francis
 Scudamore, Rich. Philip
 Sharp, Richard
 Shepley, William
 Smith, William
 St. Aubyn, Sir John
 Symonds, Thomas Powel
 Talbot, Richard Wogan
 Thornton, Henry
 Tracey, Cha. Hanbury
 Walpole, Hon. George
 Western, Charles Callis
 Wharton, John
 Whitbread, Samuel
 Wilberforce, William
 Wardle, Gwyllyn Lloyd
 TELLERS.
 Madocks, Wm. Alex.
 Folkestone, Viscount

TO

THE INDEPENDENT PEOPLE OF HAMPSHIRE.

LETTER II.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

Introductory Address.

GENTLEMEN,

AT our last County-Meeting, we resolved, with only *eight* or *ten* dissenting voices out of about *two thousand* of the most respectable men in this county, that it would be expedient for us to meet on a future day to consider of the propriety of a Petition to the King, praying His Majesty to be graciously pleased to afford us his royal countenance and support in obtaining a reformation in the Commons' House of Parliament; and, as I look forward with confident hope, that that Meeting will take the matter seriously in hand, I think it may be useful, in the meanwhile, for me to submit to you my opinions upon that interesting and important subject.

This I propose to do in the present and future Letters; and, here, at the outset, I think it due to you and to this great cause of the country to declare, that I shall, at all times, be ready to insert whatever may be sent to me, in the way of *answer* to what I shall address to you; thus securing to truth the fairest possible chance of success, by giving, through the same

channel in which my Letters will circulate, circulation to the opinions of those, who may differ from me. This has been the invariable practice of my political life. But, in order to confine the discussion within reasonable bounds, I must notify, that those who may be disposed to answer me must confine themselves to the subject; must state in the head of their performances, which of my letters they are answering, and must take the paragraphs regularly, one after another, as I shall arrange and number them; and must confine themselves, as to space, so as not to exceed, in any instance, *double* the length of that which they profess to answer. Those who may chose to enter this field of controversy, will, of course, keep copies of what they send to me; and, if I find any thing not connected with the subject, I will state it, whereupon they may make the necessary curtailments. I take these precautions, because I would not involve this interesting subject in confusion, which, to truth, is not much less an enemy than is falshood itself.

We should enter upon this discussion with minds unheated by any thing that has recently transpired; and, above all things, we should subdue in us any thing like a *spirit of revenge*. I am ready, and I have conversed with no man who is not ready, to say: "What is done cannot be undone: let there be no thought of vengeance for the past: let all that has been done be forgotten for ever, and let no one meet with any punishment or reproach on account of it, provided we now have that which shall *effectually* prevent the recurrence of such things for the future." And, indeed, if you consult history, you will find, that, amongst nations as well as amongst individuals, it is not the original and naked offence so much as a pertinacity in defending, or persevering in, it, that inspires the offended with that thirst for vengeance, which, though it may bring calamity upon the offended as well as the offender, does very seldom fail to prove destructive to the former.

Nor, if our deliberations should conclude with an unanimous decision in favour of Reform, should we, in my opinion, be too *hasty* in our expectations. All changes of great national importance require time. That which is done in great haste, is seldom well done. Improvement in all things generally proceeds by degrees; and, though we have here the book of the constitution for our guide,

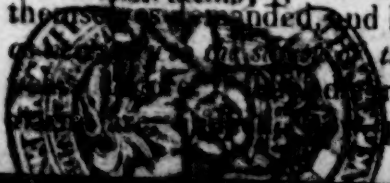
complete restoration, any more than creation, cannot be expected to be the work of a single effort. When we confront the practice with the theory of our government, which we have, at all times, a right to do, we must, of course, make a lumping appeal from the one to the other; but, when we set about the work of restoration, we must, if we mean to succeed, first remove that which we find to be most injurious and most hostile to the principles of the constitution; and thus pursue our course, till all the *essential* evils be removed.

A remark or two seems necessary here, in answer to the insinuation, and, indeed the open accusation, against all those, who stand prominently forward in the cause of Reform: it is this, that they wish for confusion; for the annihilation of property; and for uproar and bloodshed.—This, Gentlemen, has always been the charge against all those, who have had the courage to take the lead in endeavouring to root out corruption. From the nature of things, it is a charge that must be preferred against such men; because the corrupt will naturally seek to disarm those who attack them, and, it being impossible (or, at least, it has always appeared so till now) to say that *corruption is right*, there is no mode of attacking its assailants, other than that of representing them as wishing for confusion and uproar, by which representations, the uninformed are misled and the timid are frightened. By this mode, this nation has long been deceived, and alarmed. Posterity will, I hope, hardly believe; I hope, that our children will hardly credit the true history of the delusions and alarms of the last fifteen years, during several of which the Act of Habeas Corpus, or Personal Safety Act, stood repealed, and any man was liable to be sent to prison, and there to be kept for years, without a trial and without a hearing; nay, many men were so imprisoned. And what was all this for? Why was this suspension of that great law, without which, in fact, the English government is no better than the old government of France? Why, because the nation was *alarmed*; because it was persuaded that certain Clubs and Societies would destroy all property, when what those Clubs demanded, though they might do it indiscreetly, was, in truth, no more than what Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Richmond, had themselves demanded, and had represented as necessary for the nation, many of the peaceful days of which had passed; and, I

think, it will be very difficult for the friends of corruption to cause their return; but, still they harp upon the *dangers* of change, though they cannot deny, that the change would be for the better; and still, though we ask only for the restoration of a *part* of the well-known and long-tried constitution of England, as relating to the House of Commons; still they accuse us of a wish to introduce confusion, uproar and bloodshed. But, who are these accusers? Those who accused Mr. Wardle; those who denounced him to the nation as the tool of a Jacobin Conspiracy; those who have been detected in the misapplication of the public money, and in the worst sorts of corruption; these are the persons, who attribute to us a wish to destroy all property, and to introduce uproar and bloodshed. In short, if we would form a correct opinion of these efforts to excite new alarm; if we would form a correct opinion of the views of those, who raise these impudent calumnies against our cause, we have only to bear in mind, that JOHN BOWLES was the first who accused Englishmen of *Jacobinism*; that the REV. DR. O'MEARA, from under the wing of Mrs. Clarke, preached before the king against *Democracy*; and that the REV. MR. BEAZLEY, who tendered a bribe to the Duke of Portland to make him Dean of Salisbury, wrote a pamphlet upon the approaching *dangers of Popery*.—Such are the *alarmists*; and, if you bear this fact in mind, you will have very little difficulty in deciding as to what are now the *real* grounds of alarm.

Besides, who and what are the persons, who stand most prominently exposed to this accusation? SIR FRANCIS BURDETT, MR. MADOCKS, MR. WARDLE, and LORD COCHRANE. These are the only members of the House of Commons, who, as yet, have taken a *decided* and active part in the cause. And, are you to be made to believe, that these four gentlemen, or either of them, can wish ill to their country? That they, who have, all of them, such large portions of property, wish to see all property destroyed? Or, are you to be made to believe, that they, who have so much talent; so much knowledge and so much of mind in every other respect, are, upon this subject, fools? The thing is not to be believed by any man in his senses.

With respect to *myself*, I should certainly not trouble you, were it not my opinion that it may be useful, in this Introductory Address, to give you an instance of the behaviour of my opponent writers.—



Some of you will have heard, perhaps, that while I was in America, I wrote several pamphlets, some under a feigned name, and some under no name at all.—From one of these pamphlets, the London ministerial newspapers have extracted these words: "For my part, I am *no friend of the English*; I wish their island *was sunk to the bottom of the sea.*" Having taken this sentence, they tell their readers, that it is quite natural "*such a person*" should wish for a Reform that would lead to revolution.—Gentlemen, I do not recollect any thing so bad as this, ever done, or attempted to be done, by any writer in the world.—The pamphlet, from which the extract is made, was written for the purpose, and the sole purpose, of serving my king and country, and that, too, at a time and in a place, when and where no man but myself had the zeal to write a line for such a purpose. In order to give effect to what I was writing, it was necessary for me to say something to disguise the fact, that it proceeded from an *Englishman's* pen; and, that this was the case, there needs no proof but this, that the *government at home caused this pamphlet to be republished in England.* Further, for having written this and other pamphlets in America, the government here made me offers of their support, which I never accepted of. Upon my return from America those offers were renewed, but again rejected. I received marks of approbation, *for these writings*, from all the men then in power. I dined at Mr. Windham's with Pitt, which I then thought a very great honour; and, really, when Mr. Canning looks back to the time, when I dined at his house at Putney, and when he paid me so many just compliments for my exertions in my country's cause, I can hardly think, that he must not view with some degree of shame these attempts on the part of persons, who are publicly said to write under his particular patronage. As to Mr. Windham, he has declared, in open parliament, that, for my *writings in America*, I deserved a statue of gold.—Judge you, then, of the candour, the truth, the honesty, of the *writers*, who oppose Parliamentary Reform; and, *as yet*, I have seen it opposed by no writer, who is not of this description. Judge you of the motives of such men; judge you of the nature of that cause, in support of which such means are resorted to; judge you how strong my adversaries must think me in fact, in argument, and in character, when they are driven to the employment of means like these.—I have not trou-

bled you with this statement by the way of *complaint*; for, indeed, such things cannot fail to have a good effect, with all sensible men, and to such only do I address myself. The man, who takes upon him to write on politics, necessarily exposes himself to misrepresentations and calumnies of all sorts; especially if his object be to spoil the trade of the corrupt and the venal. It is his inevitable lot; but, he has always this consoling and encouraging reflection; that his adversaries, with a strict regard to the rules of proportion, are sure to adapt the measure of their anger to the magnitude of his success, and of their consequent dread of his future exertions. The greatest compliment that can possibly be paid to any writer, is, to answer his argument by an attack upon his person; and, the next is, that of appealing to his opinions, formerly expressed, especially under a total change of circumstances, whether as to the things themselves or the information relating to them. This last species of attack has been made most liberal use of against me. Just as if opinions formed and expressed, when I was not much more than half as old as I now am, and when I had, in fact, had no *experience* at all, were to invalidate, or have any weight, against the arguments that I now have to offer. Because I praised Mr. Pitt, when I was in America, or upon my return, does it follow that I was to continue to praise him after being some years a near witness of his conduct, and after having seen it proved, that he lent, without interest, 40,000*l.* of the public money, to *two members of the House of Commons*, without any authority for so doing, and even without communicating the fact to his colleagues. When I saw this come to light, and when I saw him take a *bill of indemnity*, (that is, a law to *screen him from punishment*) for this, as well as for other acts of his administration: when I saw this, was I *still to praise* him? Or, if I did it not, was I to be accused of *inconsistency*?—This was the drift of Mr. POULTER's personalities at Winchester, and of the hand-bills, which, on that morning had been posted up in the Inns and other places of the city, and all which *you* treated with that contempt, which they so well merited.—Such attempts, when made upon men of sense, always fail of their intended effect, and are sure to recoil, with tenfold force, upon those who make use of them. Any attack upon me, if it come in a creditable shape, I am at all times ready to answer, and am *certain* that I shall beat my

adversary; but, having thus exposed to your view the means by which the enemies of Parliamentary Reform have hitherto endeavoured to excite a prejudice against one of its principal literary advocates, I shall not, hereafter, suffer the discussion to be encumbered with any thing not immediately belonging to the subject; I shall not suffer myself to be lured from the important points at issue by any thing whatever relating personally to me.

There is one more topic, upon which I think it may be necessary to say a few words in this introductory address, and even before I come to lay down the heads and the order of the discussion. I allude to the *cry*, with which every attempt to obtain a Reform of the Parliament is, upon all occasions, met by those who have so manifest an interest in preventing such Reform. The cry is this: "What, you want a REVOLUTION, do you;" and, then they fall to a description of the horrors of the FRENCH REVOLUTION.

Gentlemen, I do not think that you, or that any part, or any one, of my readers can be so weak as to be swayed by a fallacy so palpable as this; but, it may not, upon this occasion, be amiss to give it an exposure in detail, in order to see whether those, who make use of it, have in them any remains of shame.

There was a *revolution* in France, which produced great calamities and horrors, and, therefore, we are desired to believe, that *all* revolutions must produce calamities and horrors; and this doctrine, too, is preached to us from the very same lips whence proceed endless *praises* of the revolution in England, which placed the House of Brunswick upon the throne.

Supposing, however, all political revolutions to be very mischievous; supposing all changes in the succession to thrones, in the forms of governments, in the distribution of the powers in a nation; supposing all these to be, at all times, mischievous, the supposition, though a very wild one, would not bear against the cause of Reform in Parliament, because we, who wish for that Reform, neither propose, nor wish for, *any thing new*. We want nothing but the sincere profession and the faithful observance of what is *already* the constitution of England, as laid down, and clearly laid down, in the *books of our laws*. To set up against us, therefore, the cry of *revolution*, can, I am confident, have, with men of sense, no other effect than that of adding one more to the numerous proofs, which we already possess,

of the insincerity of the enemies of Reform.

But, let us *patiently*, if possible, inquire a little into the grounds of the monstrous supposition, that, because confusion and bloodshed took place in France some years ago, in consequence of the changes there made, the same must take place here if a reform in the House of Commons be adopted.—What *similarity*, let me first ask, is there in the two cases? In France the government was despotic; any man could, at any time, be sent to prison, and there kept for life, without trial and without hearing; the laws were in fact made by the king's sole will, there were no juries to try causes of any sort; the feudal system was still in such vigour as to make it a crime, in many places, for people to grind their own corn or bake their own bread, being compelled to carry the materials to the mill and to the oven of the Lord of the Manor, paying him a heavy tax for the grinding or the baking. Endless would be the points of contrast; but, for our present purpose, it is quite sufficient to state merely this, that the French had *no legislative assembly*; no body of persons, who, as to the making of laws, had any share of authority. In France, what was proposed to be effected, was a total change in the very nature of the government; the thing set about was the making of a *government of a new sort*, and, of course, taking the old one to pieces, from top to bottom. It was not, therefore, very wonderful, that, from the resistance of the feudal Lords as from the crown, great anger should be engendered, and deadly strife arise; and, especially when the numerous noblesse, instead of yielding their oppressive privileges, and endeavouring to assist the people with their advice, flew with eagerness to join an army of foreigners, called by them for the purpose of compelling the people to submit to their authority, and to prevent the redress of what all the world acknowledged to be grievances that no human beings ought to support, and the refusal, the obstinate refusal, to consent to any measure, which should prevent the return of which, was the cause, and the sole cause, of that sway which bloody and impious men afterwards obtained, and by the means of which sway so many foolish and wicked and cruel acts were committed. But what has all this, or any part of it, to do with our question of *Reform in Parliament*? Does that measure contemplate any one of those objects that were in the contemplation of the French? Have

we any feudal Lords to whose mills and ovens we are compelled to carry our corn and our flour? Have we not juries already? Have we not laws (while we keep them *unsuspended*) which prevent arbitrary imprisonment? And, have we not Houses of Legislators, without whose consent no laws can be passed? Do we, like the French, stand in need of a change in the nature of the government; of the abolition of the old powers and the erection of new ones; and, in short, of a new sort of government, from top to bottom? You know, Gentlemen; all the world must know, that we stand in need of no such thing; and that there is not, in the whole nation, one single man, capable of obtaining half a score of adherents, who entertains so mad a notion. We, as I said before, want *nothing new*. We have no schemes or projects; all that we want is that share in the government, which the constitution gives us, and of which we think ourselves not at present in possession, owing to the abuses, which have, by degrees, crept into the Representation in Parliament. This is all we want; and, because we want this, we are accused of wishing for *Revolution*, and our adversaries, the friends of corruption, having neither fact nor argument wherewith to oppose to us, hold out to those whom they think themselves able to deceive and terrify, the "dreadful consequences of the Revolution in France," than which a more gross attempt at imposition, surely, never was made. That this attempt will not succeed I am perfectly satisfied. I am convinced, that, sooner or later, and the sooner from the absence of every thing like *violence or haste*, the measure of Reform will and must be adopted. Nay, the Bill of Mr. Curwen, now before the House of Commons, (and which Bill will, to all appearance, pass in that House) completely recognizes the main principle, upon which we proceed; namely, that Seats in that House ought not to be obtained by corrupt practices, and that votes in it ought not to be paid for, either in money or in money's worth. In the introduction and entertaining of this Bill, the House itself acknowledges, *that we have good grounds of complaint on the score of representation*; the House itself acknowledges, that, to a certain extent, at least, *Parliamentary Reform is necessary*; and, therefore, it would be all as just to accuse the House of *Revolutionary* intentions, as to prefer that accusation against us, who, out of the House, push for that Reform.

Having endeavoured to place in a clear light the fallacy, not to give it any worse name, of the general objections, or, rather, the out-cries, which have been raised against a Reform in the Representation of the People, in the House of Commons, I propose, in my succeeding letters, to discuss the following questions: I. Whether the present state of the Representation be consonant with that constitution, which has so long been the boast of Englishmen. II. What sort of Reform ought to be made. III. Whether the nation would be benefited, and, if so, in what way, by such Reform. IV. Whether the present be a proper time for making such Reform. —These, gentlemen, it appears to me, are the only questions that we have to discuss and to decide upon; and, if we discuss and decide upon them without passion, I have no hesitation to say, that your decision will be the decision of the nation, and that, at no distant day, if your acts correspond with your opinions, if you steadily and ardently, but, above all things, *steadily*, persevere, in your constitutional efforts to obtain your object, that object will be obtained. I am,

Your friend,

WM. COBBETT.

Botley, 16th May, 1809.

WILTSHIRE MEETING.

I am sorry, that it is out of my power to give a full account of this Meeting, which was held at the city of SALISBURY, on the 17th instant, and at which a Resolution was passed, in substance, as to most parts, like that passed in Hampshire, but, substituting for the interesting *declaration* of Mr. CREEVEY, the still more interesting and more authentic record of the *motion* of Mr. MADOCKS, and the *decision of the House* thereon.—For this Resolution I have not, in the present number, room to insert. It will, of course, have its place with those passed in other counties.—The Meeting was very numerous and respectable, there being certainly above 1,500 persons present.—The 1st Resolution was moved by Mr. HUNT of Enford, at the close of a very able, an argumentative and an eloquent speech. It was seconded by Mr. COLLINS, one of the corporation of Salisbury, in a manner to be naturally expected from a gentleman, who, I understand, has long been universally looked up to for talent, as well as for public spirit. A second Resolution, passing censure upon the two county members, was moved by Mr. BLEEKE of Warminster, who, in this

his first essay, afforded to the "*persons of consequence*," in the county, a pretty good proof, that talents are not wanted, amongst the yeomanry, when occasion calls them forth. — These "*persons of consequence*" did, we have been told, keep away, lest, by their presence, they should *give weight* to the proceedings. Now, it appears to me, that the natural thing for them to do would have been to come to the Meeting, and convince us of their *consequence*; make us *feel* their *weight*, by opposing, and setting aside, the Resolutions, moved and seconded by persons of "*no consequence*." — If those "*persons of consequence*" *approved* of thanks to Mr. Wardle, and yet did not like to see the business in the hands of persons of "*no consequence*," why did they not take it in hand themselves? Oh, no! They did *not* approve of such thanks. That is very clear; and, it is equally clear, that they knew that the county in general did approve of them. — Let me take the liberty to tell these "*persons of consequence*" that, it seems to me, that they are in a fair way of losing their consequence, unless they very soon begin to bestir themselves; for, they will be so good as to excuse me, if I think it the oddest of all possible ways of keeping up their consequence, to let the world see that they are afraid to face those, whom they represent as possessed of no consequence at all. — Say what they will about the matter, the county will want no one to tell them, that nothing but *conscious weakness* could induce them, upon such an occasion, to keep away. This is what the whole county will be well satisfied of, and that being the case, the ultimate effect, as to themselves, it is by no means difficult to foresee. — The High Sheriff, Sir CHARLES MALLET, who appears to be a very clever man, conducted the business of the day in a very fair and impartial manner. — It was said, in the morning, that there were several gentlemen, come with a firm resolution, to oppose the vote of thanks; but, the result shewed, that, either they became converts themselves, or despaired of making proselytes; for, not a man opened his lips in the way of opposition. With their *hats*, indeed, a very few expressed their dissent; but, the decision was of that sort, which may be fairly called unanimous. There was a little of division upon the question of censure of the two county members; but, it was very small; and, indeed, the impression produced by the whole of the proceedings, was, that this county, so long apparently

dead, and in which there had not been a County-Meeting for thirty years, was beginning to rouse from its lethargy. — The whole of the Proceedings were taken down by Mr. WILLETT, a gentleman connected with the London news-paper, the STATESMAN, whose unsolicited attendance was gratefully acknowledged by a numerous company of gentlemen, who, after the Meeting was over, assembled at dinner. Indeed, this paper, which is published in the *evening*, and which, therefore, is convenient for the country, deserves the particular encouragement of all those, who are enemies to corruption and friends to reform. It is the only London news-paper, that I have heard of, which has shown any disposition to do full justice to the County-Meetings; and, those who are sincere in any public cause, should always make a point to support, in every way that they are able, that part of the Press, which stands forward in that cause. — For this reason, as well as for the sake of more extensive circulation, I shall take care, that the proprietor of the STATESMAN has an opportunity of publishing my letters upon *Parliamentary Reform*, on the same day, on which they are published in the Register; so that those, who take an Evening Paper, and do not take the Register, may avail themselves, if they think it worth their while, of the means of possessing these Letters in the Statesman.

MR. PALMER'S CLAIM.

This question, which is, I perceive, to come on for discussion, in the House of Commons, on the 25th instant, had escaped my attention until it was too late to enter upon it in a manner that would be worthy of such a question. My intention was to have compared Mr. Palmer's Claim, and the objections made to it, with the sums lavished upon many others, and the reasons, or, rather, the no reasons, by which the granting of such such sums are attempted to be justified. Mr. Palmer's *services* the whole nation feels and acknowledges; and yet his Claim has been denied, while advocates in abundance are found for the sinecures of the Seymours and the Garniers and the Pensions of the Pagets! But, let us hope, that, after what has come to light, there will, at least, be found a disposition to grant this claim. I have never met with any man, who did not wish to see it granted. This is a case, in which the nation most anxiously wishes to part with its money. How much have we heard, in other cases, of not being niggardly! How

much have we heard, in other cases, of the "liberality of a great nation!" How much have we heard, in other cases, of the reward due to national services! Aye, and in cases, too, where it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to make the existence of those services evident to any common understanding. Mr. Palmer demands bare justice; the bare fulfilment of the contract, on the part of the public, he having fulfilled his part of it, and that, too, at his *own risk*; a contract, according to which he was *sure to lose*, unless the public *gained*; such a contract as no man ever, before or since, made with the public, and such a contract as few men, after his fate, will be tempted to imitate.

Salisbury, 18th May, 1809.

PROCEEDINGS

In COUNTIES, CITIES, BOROUGHs, &c. relative to the recent INQUIRY in the House of Commons, respecting the Conduct of the DUKE OF YORK (Continued from p. 736.

TOWN OF LIVERPOOL.

At a Meeting of the Friends of Constitutional Freedom and Enemies of Political Corruption, held at the Globe Tavern, Liverpool, April 21, 1809.—George Williams, esq. in the Chair.

It was Resolved, that the grateful Thanks of this Meeting are due to G. L. Wardle, esq. for the undaunted, firm and patriotic manner in which he brought forward and prosecuted the late Inquiry into the conduct of his Royal Highness the Duke of York; a measure which has not only occasioned the removal of his Royal Highness from Office, but by having opened the eyes of the Country to the conduct of their Representatives, is likely to be productive of the happiest and most important consequences to the nation at large.

Resolved, That the practice of persons holding Offices or enjoying Pensions under the Crown, and having at the same time a Seat in the Commons House of Parliament as Representatives of the People, although it has been guarded against by our ancestors with peculiar jealousy, has now arisen to an alarming excess; and that it is become highly expedient to resort to those methods for remedying the evil which have formerly been adopted by the Legislature of this Country, and to use our endeavours to obtain the entire exclusion of Placemen and Pensioners from the House of Commons.

Resolved, that the sending of Members to Parliament, by places where the popu-

lation is so far diminished as to render them liable to corrupt practices and undue influence, whilst other towns and places, of great importance and considerable population, do not enjoy such right, is inconsistent with the spirit of the Constitution, and is a defect introduced by inattention and lapse of time, which ought to be speedily and effectually remedied.

Resolved, that a letter be written to Mr. Wardle, testifying the deep sense which this Meeting entertains of his great and meritorious services, and that the same be signed by the Persons now present, and be left for the signature of such other Inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of Liverpool as may think proper to subscribe the same.

Resolved, that the Thanks of this Meeting are also due to sir F. Burdett, bart. who seconded and supported the Motion of Mr. Wardle; to lord Folkestone, and S. Whitbread, esq. by whose able and strenuous exertions, through a long and intricate investigation, the nation is indebted for the fullest information on this subject; and to lord Stanley, sir S. Romilly, gen. Ferguson, T. W. Coke, esq. J. C. Curwen, esq. and the other Members of the House of Commons, who, by the manly avowal of their sentiments, and their conscientious and unbiassed votes, have evinced their integrity and independence.

Resolved, that the Thanks of this Meeting are due to Wm. Roscoe, esq. for proposing the Address to G. L. Wardle, esq. and the above Resolutions, which have been unanimously adopted by this Meeting.

Resolved, that this Meeting views with great regret and just indignation the refusal of the Mayor to call a Meeting of the Inhabitants to take into consideration those public proceedings in which the best interests and most valued rights of their Country were deeply involved, and that it is the opinion of this Meeting that the Inhabitants be convened to exercise those privileges which are secured to them by the laws of their Country, without any further application to the Mayor.

BOROUGH OF IPSWICH.

THE Portmen of the Borough of Ipswich, at whose instance a Great Court was held April 21, for the purpose of returning Thanks to Lieut. Col. Wardle, for his meritorious conduct in Parliament, feel it due to their own character to submit to their Brother-Freemen who were not present in Court, and to the Public at large, a Copy of the Resolution which they

moved on the occasion, that the spirit and temper by which they were guided in the bringing forward of this measure, and that of their Opponents, by whom it was defeated, may be perfectly understood.

"That the Thanks of this Court be given to Lieut. Col. Wardle for his meritorious and patriotic exertions in the House of Commons, by which, gross misconduct in the Chief Direction of the Army has been detected and exposed, and an example set from which the most beneficial consequences may be expected by the loyal Subjects of this Realm in a Reform of those Abuses which tarnish the lustre and impair the energies of our happy and glorious Constitution."

Such was the Resolution, and the only Resolution of a public nature with which they were provided; and having scrupulously avoided in it every thought and every expression which they supposed could possibly give offence to any personal or party feeling, they hoped to have conciliated the concurrence and support of all their Brother-Freemen, and deemed it impossible that sentiments and wishes so perfectly congenial with those of the great Body of the People, could be negatived at a Great Court of the Borough of Ipswich, till they found a Party industriously formed there to frustrate altogether, by noise and tumult, the purpose for which it was convened.

May their opponents longer enjoy the full credit of the victory they gained on the occasion. The Portmen, on their part, are quite content to take to themselves the whole obloquy of bringing forward a measure, which they are satisfied must meet the approbation of all but the miserable tools or dupes of those who thrive on that System of Corruption and Abuse against which it was levelled.—H. Seekamp, John Spooner, W. B. Clarke, Wm. Hammond, John Forest, F. F. Seekamp, Fred. Cornwallis, B. Brame.

BOROUGH OF CHIPPING-WYCOMBE.

At a Court of Common Council, held in the Guildhall of the said Borough this 22d day of April, 1809, Samuel Manning, esq. Mayor, in the Chair.

Resolved, That the Thanks of this Meeting be transmitted to G. L. Wardle, esq. for his patriotic conduct in bringing forward and steadily persevering in an inquiry relative to certain Abuses which appear to have existed in Military Promotions tending to the degradation of the Army.

Resolved, That G. L. Wardle, esq. be elected a Burgess of this ancient Corporation.

Resolved, That the Thanks of this Meeting be presented to sir John Dashwood King, Bart. and Thomas Baring, esq. the worthy Representatives of this Borough in Parliament, for their independent conduct on the late Investigation.

Resolved, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to sir S. Romilly, knt. one of the Burgesses of this Borough, for his able defence of our Constitutional Rights on the late important Question.

Resolved, That such Votes of Thanks be communicated by the Deputy Town Clerk.

COUNTY OF MONMOUTH.

At a Meeting of the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders of the County of Monmouth, convened on April 28, 1809, at the Town Hall in Usk, by the High Sheriff of the said County, in pursuance of a Requisition for that purpose, in order to return the Thanks of the County to G. L. Wardle, esq. for his able and patriotic conduct in bringing forward and investigating the recent Charges against his Royal Highness the Duke of York.

Resolved, That G. L. Wardle, esq. by his firm and persevering exertions on that memorable Inquiry against a host of talents and other great discouragements and difficulties, has deserved well of his country, and that the Thanks of this Meeting be given to him.

That the Thanks of the Meeting be also given to Henry Bankes, esq. for his Amendment, which, by being supported by two hundred and one Members, produced the resignation of the late Commander in Chief, and the Meeting gladly avails itself of this public opportunity of expressing its admiration of, and obligations for, his high-spirited and independent conduct on the formation of the present Finance Committee, and for his essential services as Chairman of the last.

That the Thanks of this Meeting are also due to the Minority on Mr. Wardle's Motion, the Minority of Mr. Bankes's Amendment, the Minority on sir T. Turton's Amendment, and the Minority on Mr. Perceval's Amendment.

That it is the opinion of this Meeting a very considerable number of Placemen and Pensioners who have seats in Parliament, are under the influence of Government, and that a temperate Reform in Parliament is therefore necessary, and that

it is the duty of this County to express its wishes to their representatives, that they would support a strict investigation into the various abuses of the public expenditure.

That the abuses attacked by Col. Wardle and Mr. Bankes form only a part of a corrupt system long acted upon, and that no permanent good will arise from the late investigation, unless followed up by a general reformation of the public abuses in many departments of the state.

STEWARTRY OF KIRKCUDBRIGHT.

At a General Annual Meeting of the Commissioners of the Land Tax for the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, April 29, 1809. James Murray M'Culloch, Esq. of Ardwall, chosen Preses.—

The Meeting came to the following unanimous Resolutions:—

1st, That the investigation lately made in the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain, into the conduct of the late Commander in Chief of the British Army, has discovered gross corruption and abuses in the administration of the military department.

2d, That the Thanks of the County be given to G. L. Wardle, esq. member of Parliament, for the independent spirit with which he undertook, and the great ability and undaunted perseverance with which he conducted, an enquiry, the consequences of which the Meeting trust will be of permanent advantage to the interests of the Country. And,

3d, That the Preses do transmit a copy of these Resolutions to Mr. Wardle; and that the Clerk cause the same to be advertised in the London, Edinburgh, and Dumfries Newspapers.

TOWN OF MANCHESTER.

At a very numerous and respectable Meeting of the Inhabitants of the Towns of Manchester and Salford, convened by a Requisition which was signed by upwards of Two Thousand Persons, for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of passing a Vote of Thanks to G. L. Wardle, esq. M. P. and to those Members of the House of Commons who so honourably supported him during the late arduous and important Investigation, and held at the Bull's Head Inn, in Manchester, on Wednesday, the 3d day of May, 1809, Robert Philips, esq. in the Chair.

The following Resolutions were unanimously passed:—

That the gross and corrupt practices

which have been proved to exist in various departments of the State have excited in us the deepest regret, and we feel that G. L. Wardle, esq. M. P. by the manly, temperate and impartial manner in which he brought forward his Charges against the late Commander in Chief, and by the zeal, firmness, and intrepidity with which he prosecuted the Inquiry, has faithfully discharged his duty to his country, and does in a high degree merit the Thanks of this Meeting.

That the Thanks of this Meeting are also due to those Members of the House of Commons who so honourably supported col. Wardle during the late arduous and important Investigation.

That the Chairman do transmit these Resolutions to G. L. Wardle, esq.

TOWN OF DONCASTER.

At a numerous and respectable Meeting of the Inhabitants of the Town and Neighbourhood of Doncaster, held at this day at the Town-hall, pursuant to a Requisition for that purpose, the Worshipful the Mayor in the Chair:

Resolved unanimously,—1st. That the grateful Thanks of this Meeting be given to G. L. Wardle, esq. for the faithful discharge of his duty in Parliament, by instituting and prosecuting an Inquiry into the conduct of the late Commander in Chief, by which means circumstances have been brought to light highly injurious to the real interests of the Crown, and subversive of the welfare and prosperity of the people.

2d, That the particular Thanks of this Meeting be given to sir F. Burdett, bart. lord Folkestone, Mr. Whitbread, sir S. Romilly, adm. Markham, lord Althorpe, and the rest of the 125 Members who supported Mr. Wardle's motion.

3d, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to all those Members of the House or Commons, who voted in the several Minorities, on the different Divisions, which took place during the late important and patriotic Inquiry.

4th, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the two worthy Representatives of this County, Wm. Wilberforce, esq. and lord visc. Milton, for their honourable and independent conduct in the able support they gave to the recent Investigation.

5th That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to major gen. Ferguson for the honourable, independent and distinguished discharge of his parliamentary duty on the late occasion.

6th, That this Meeting, anxious to preserve unimpaired the purity and blessings of that excellent form of Government, which our ancestors have transmitted to us, and ardently wishing to see all the constituted authorities preserved and revered in the due exercise of their respective functions, feels it to be an indispensable duty at this eventful moment, when all the nations that surround us have paid the forfeit of their corruption in the annihilation of their Government, to call for a strict, a temperate, but an effectual inquiry into every species of public abuse, and to express a hope that hereafter, on similar occasions, the sense of the House of Commons may appear to be less at variance with the sense of the Nation; and that a larger body of the representatives of the people may be found to defend the constitution, by correcting public abuses, so effectually as to secure to the country the honest application and economical expenditure of public money.

7th, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to Wm. Wrightson, esq. for the independent, moderate, and truly constitutional manner in which he has expressed his sentiments on the present occasion.

8th, That the County Members be requested to transmit to Mr. Wardle the Thanks of this Meeting as expressed in the first Resolution: and that the Chairman be desired to convey the Thanks of this Meeting to those gentlemen mentioned in the 2d and 5th Resolutions.

TOWN OF BEVERLEY.

At a Meeting of the Inhabitants of the Town and Neighbourhood of Beverley, held at the Guildhall, in Beverley, on Wednesday the 3d day of May, 1809, for the purpose of considering a Vote of Thanks to G. L. Wardle, esq. for his patriotic exertions, in instituting and prosecuting the Inquiry into the conduct of his Royal Highness the late Commander in Chief.—Richard Fox, esq. Mayor, in the Chair.

Resolved Unanimously, That this Meeting deeply deploring the too evident existence of abuses and other practices of evil tendency in various branches of Public Affairs, do highly approve of the firm and independent spirit evinced by G. L. Wardle, esq. in instituting and steadily prosecuting the Inquiry into the conduct of the late Commander in Chief, and that by his patriotic exertions he is deservedly entitled to and has the Thanks and Gratitude of this Meeting.

That the Thanks of this Meeting be pre-

sented to John Wharton, esq. one of the Representatives of this Borough, for his support upon the said Inquiry.

That the Thanks of this Meeting be also presented to W. Wilberforce, esq. and Lord Viscount Milton, the Members for this County, together with the Independent Minority, for their votes and exertions on that occasion.

That the Chairman be requested to sign these Resolutions as the act of this Meeting, and to transmit copies thereof to G. L. Wardle, esq. J. Wharton, esq. W. Wilberforce, esq. and Lord Milton.

COUNTY OF HUNTINGDON.

At a Meeting of the Freeholders of the said County, held at the Shire Hall in Huntingdon, in the said County, on Friday, the fifth day of May, 1809, pursuant to a Requisition to the High Sheriff for that purpose:

Resolved unanimously, 1. That it is the opinion of this Meeting that the late Investigation by the Honourable House of Commons into the Conduct of the late Commander in Chief, is a matter of infinite importance to this country, inasmuch as it has furnished a strong incitement to that Honourable House to exert themselves to defend the Throne and the People from the destructive effects of Corruption in every department of the State.

2. That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to G. L. Wardle, esq. for his courage, candour, and perseverance in conducting the said Investigation.

3. That this Meeting have seen with much satisfaction the steps taken by the wisdom of Parliament for the suppression of any abuses that may exist in the State, and hope and trust they will continue their exertions until the same shall be effectually reformed.

TOWN OF GUILDFORD.

At a Meeting of the inhabitants of Guildford, held in the Town-hall, the 25th of April 1809.

Resolved unanimously, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to G. L. Wardle, esq. for instituting an Inquiry against the late Commander in Chief, which has led to the discovery of certain abuses highly injurious to fair and honourable promotion in the Army, and detrimental to the public service.

Resolved, That the Resolutions and Address be signed by the Mayor, and presented by him to G. L. Wardle, esq. and

that the same be inserted in the *Courier and County Herald*.

An ADDRESS of the Inhabitants of the Town, assembled on the same day and place.

"To G. L. WARDLE, Esq. M. P.

"SIR; We consider that no foreign conquest or efforts of genius are so essential to the Country as the honest exertions of Independent Members of Parliament, to expose, and endeavour to exterminate, corrupt practices.

"We revere our King and Constitution, and complain of no sacrifices that we are called upon for their security and support; but when such transactions as have lately been exposed are suffered to exist without notice, how truly thankful must every true and loyal Briton be that such an independent Member as yourself stands forward as Champion in the cause of Truth.

"We most unfeignedly give you our cordial and grateful thanks, and most sincerely wish that you may for many years enjoy the heart-felt satisfaction of being instrumental to the happiness of your own Countrymen.—J. MARTYR, Mayor."

COUNTY OF NORFOLK.

At a most numerous and respectable Meeting of the Freeholders of the County of Norfolk, held at the Shire-house, on Tuesday, the 2d of May, 1809, the following Resolutions were moved by the hon. George Herbert (who was called to the Chair in the absence of the High Sheriff,) seconded by Thomas Beevor, esq. and adopted without one dissentient voice:

Resolved, 1. That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to G. L. Wardle, esq. for the indefatigable zeal and disinterested patriotism he has evinced in detecting and bringing to light the gross and unparalleled Corruption which has long existed in the office of the Commander in Chief; and for the firm and temperate perseverance with which (in defiance of threats and difficulties) he carried on the late Investigation in Parliament, to his own honour, and the advantage of his Country.

2. That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to all those who cordially assisted Mr. Wardle in the arduous task he had undertaken, shewing themselves at once the Friends of the People and the Enemies of Corruption—especially to sir F. Burdett, lord Folkestone, S. Whitbread, esq. sir S. Romilly, sir T. Turton, J. C. Curwen, esq. C. W. Wynne, esq. major-general Fergusson, and adm. Markham.

3. That the Thanks of this Meeting

are in an especial manner due to our worthy Representative, T. W. Coke, esq. who divided with the patriotic minority of 125, in favour of Mr. Wardle's Motion; and for the firm and manly manner in which he delivered his own sentiments, and those of the People in general; thereby proving himself worthy of the confidence that has been so long reposed in him by the Freeholders of this County.

4. That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to our other Representative, sir J. H. Astley, bart. for his vote in favour of sir T. Turton's amendment.

5. That it is the earnest hope of this Meeting, that the truly patriotic example of Mr. Wardle may stimulate others to exert themselves in their duty to their Constituents, by eradicating Corruption from every branch of the Government and Legislature.

6. That the Majority in the late divisions in Parliament, acquitting the Commander in Chief of all personal Corruption, and of all Connivance at Corruption, was in direct opposition to the sense of the People; and that the necessity is thereby evinced of adopting some effectual Reform, in order that the voice of the Representatives may become the voice of the People.

7. That it is the decided opinion of this Meeting, that no substantial and permanent good can be derived by the Country from any change of Ministers, unless accompanied by an entire change of system; and that the most certain method of rendering Parliamentary Reform effectual is, to follow the laudable example of Westminster, by returning, free of expence, such representatives as are worthy of confidence; and by shortening the duration of Parliaments, in order that a frequent appeal to the sense of the People may guide the conduct of our Representatives, without increasing their expences.

8. That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the gentlemen who signed the Requisition.

9. That those Resolutions be inserted in the *Norwich Papers*, the *Ipswich and Bury Papers*, and the *London Papers*.

The following Resolutions were also moved by John Kerrich, esq. seconded by the hon. George Herbert, and adopted with equal unanimity:

10. That a Subscription be entered into by the Freeholders of the County of Norfolk, to purchase a Piece of Plate, which shall be presented to Mr. Wardle in their Names.

11. That the Gentlemen who signed the Requisition to the High Sheriff for this Meeting be requested to act as a Committee for the application of the Funds arising from the Subscriptions, and that they be authorised to present the Plate to Mr. Wardle, in any way, and with any inscription they may deem explanatory of the intention of the donors.

12. That the Subscription do finally close in the coming Summer Assize Week, and the purposes for which it was entered into be then proceeded upon by the Committee with all convenient dispatch.

13. That the Bankers in Norfolk and Suffolk, and Messrs. Barclays, Tritton and Bevan, Lombard-street, be requested to receive any subscription, not exceeding Two Guineas.

BOROUGH OF BOSTON.

At a numerous and respectable Meeting of the Inhabitants of this Borough, convened by advertisement, at the White Hart Inn, this day, May 9, 1809, for the purpose of considering of the propriety of voting an Address of Thanks to G. L. Wardle, esq. for his recent conduct in Parliament,

Abraham Sheath, esq. in the Chair: The following Resolutions were carried with only one dissenting voice:

Resolved, 1. That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to G. L. Wardle, esq. for his manly and independent Conduct in Parliament during the recent Investigation of the Charges brought against the Commander in Chief, and thereby exposing various Abuses in the Military Department in the State.

2. That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the Patriotic Minority of 125, who supported Colonel Wardle, in his arduous undertaking in the House of Commons, shewing themselves at once the Friends of the People, and the Enemies of Corruption.

3. That the Thanks of this Meeting are due to W. A. Madocks, esq. one of the Representatives of this Borough, and to the hon. C. A. Pelham, one of the Representatives of this County, for their Votes on this important Question.

4. That it is the opinion of this Meeting, that it will be highly expedient that the strictest inquiries into the several Departments of the State be still farther prosecuted by the House of Commons, being fully convinced that no change of Ministers, unless accompanied by an entire change of system, can be of essential

service to the Interests and Welfare of the Country.

COUNTY OF HERTFORD.

At a Meeting of the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders of the County of Hertford, held at the Shire Hall, at Hertford, in the same county, on the 13th of May, 1809, convened by the High Sheriff, in consequence of a Requisition addressed to him for the purpose of expressing their sense of the conduct of their representatives in Parliament with respect to the Charges against his Royal Highness the late Commander in Chief, and their sentiments upon the corrupt practices which have been brought to light by the evidence which has been given in the House of Commons upon the investigation of those Charges,—The High Sheriff in the Chair:

Resolved, That the Parliamentary Investigation into the Conduct of the late Commander in Chief, and the result of other Parliamentary Inquiries, have fully satisfied this Meeting of the existence of great abuses in several departments of the Executive Government of the country.

That G. L. Wardle, esq. by his unexampled intrepidity, integrity, and ability in originating and persevering in that inquiry, unsupported by party interests, and opposed by power, has faithfully discharged his duty as an honest Member of Parliament, rendered an important service to his country, and merited the warmest thanks and approbation of this Meeting.

That the hon. Thomas Brand and sir John Saunders Sebright, bart. the Representatives in Parliament for this county, by the disposition they have manifested to inquire into and check abuses and corruption, by the support they uniformly gave to the appointment of an efficient Finance Committee, and particularly by the active support they gave to Mr. Wardle's motion, and to the rendering effective the Inquiry, have, in a high degree, merited the approbation and confidence of their constituents, and that it is the earnest hope of this Meeting that they will persevere in inquiring into every abuse till the public confidence in the administration of national affairs is fully restored.

That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to sir F. Burdett, bart. who seconded Mr. Wardle's motion; to lord Folkestone, and S. Whitbread, esq. who unremittingly promoted the Inquiry, and to lord John Townshend, Joseph Halsey, esq. and Sa-

muel Smith, esq. Members residing in this county, and to sir S. Romilly, gen. Ferguson, adm. Markham, J. C. Curwen, esq. lord visc. Althorpe, C. W. Wynne, T. W. Coke, esq. and the rest of the 125 Members who divided in favour of Mr. Wardle's motion for an Address to his Majesty.

That the Thanks of this Meeting be also given to Nicholson Calvert, esq. Daniel Giles, esq. and to the honourable William Lamb, Members, residing in this county, and to all those other Members of the House of Commons who composed the numerous respectable, and eventually successful, Minorities.

Resolved unanimously, That the increasing influence of the Crown is an evil progressively undermining the constitutional rights of the people, and that the late prodigious and rapid increase of our national debt, with that of our military and colonial establishment, have created an influence, the force of which, acting upon a great body of Electors, has driven the liberties of this country from the firm basis of popular representation, to a dependance upon the moderation and forbearance of the Crown.

Resolved unanimously, That, although it is the duty of the great Officers of the Crown to bring to light delinquency and abuses in office, yet we have seen with extreme regret the Members of Administration exerting their influence to screen delinquency, and prevent the discovery of mal-practices in several recent instances, and while we earnestly deprecate all unconstitutional attempts at reformation out of the House of Commons, we think it necessary to express our earnest hope that the independent and patriotic Members of that honourable House will exert themselves in obtaining that Reform, as also in discovering and prosecuting all corrupt abuses in every department of the State, and in applying such constitutional checks as may secure the people against a recurrence of the same.

Resolved unanimously, That this Meeting has perceived with regret that the Majorities of the House of Commons upon this and some other recent occasions, have differed essentially from the sense of the people, thereby affording them a convincing proof that a Reform in the Representation of the People is indispensibly necessary to the expression of the public sentiments.

Resolved unanimously, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to William Plumer, esq. our late worthy and independent

representative, who signed the Requisition and brought forward the Resolutions, as the steady friend of Reform and enemy of Corruption, and for his patriotic and disinterested conduct on all occasions in support of the independence of this County, and the general rights and liberties of the people.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

SPANISH REVOLUTION.—*Decree of the Supreme Junta, dated Feb. 7, 1809, (concluded from p. 576.)*

—that acts of the most atrocious kind, and which make human nature shudder, are daily heard of, such as the death of a nun, who threw herself into a well, to avoid the brutality of a Frenchman; the cruel murder of a mother, whose breasts were cut off in the act of giving suck to her son, by those monsters, who afterwards sabred her infant; and a number of other cases equally horrible; atrocities painful to write, dreadful to read, and degrading to endure;—finally, his Majesty being convinced, that still to observe the laws of natural equity with those who respect no law whatever, would not be moderation and justice, but the most culpable indifference and the basest meanness, has resolved to repress and punish those crimes. Calling therefore all Europe to witness the awful necessity which has compelled him to resort to the means of retaliation, by returning on a sanguinary banditti violence for violence, he hereby decrees:

1. That no quarter shall be given to any French soldier, Officer or General, who may be made prisoner in any town or district, in which acts contrary to the laws of war have been committed by the enemy, but that such persons shall be immediately put to the sword, as an example to their companions and a satisfaction to outraged humanity.

2. That the present Decree shall be printed, proclaimed, and distributed in the Spanish armies, in order to its due execution. You are also required to make arrangements for the fulfilment of the same.—The Marquis of ASTORGA, Vice President.—MARTIN DE GARAY. Done in the Royal Al-cazan of Seville, Feb. 7, 1809.

TURKEY.—*Treaty between Great Britain and the Sublime Porte.*

1. From the moment of the signature of the present Treaty all acts of hostility

shall cease, between England and Turkey, and the prisoners on both sides, in consequence of this happy peace, shall be at liberty in thirty-one days after the signature of this Treaty, or sooner if possible.

2. If there should be any places belonging to the Sublime Porte, in possession of Great Britain, they are to be restored, and given up to the Sublime Porte, with all their cannon, ammunition, and other effects, in the same condition in which they were found when occupied by the English; and this restitution must take place within thirty-one days after the signature of the present Treaty.

3. If there shall be effects or property appertaining to English merchants, or sequestrated under the jurisdiction of the Sublime Porte, that shall be all returned and restored to the proprietors—and in like manner, if there shall be effects, property, or vessels, appertaining to the merchants and subjects of the Sublime Porte, under sequestration at Malta, or in the other Isles and States of his Britannic Majesty, they shall in like manner be entirely returned and restored to the proprietors.

4. The articles of the Treaty stipulated in the Turkish year 1086, in the moon Djemaz ul Akber, as also the article relative to the commerce of the Black Sea, and the other privileges (*midjazals*) equally established by the acts of subsequent periods, shall be observed and maintained as heretofore, and as if they had not suffered any interruption.

5. In consequence of the good treatment and favour granted by the Sublime Porte to the English merchants with respect to their merchandize and property, and every thing of which they may stand in need—and, in like manner, with regard to all objects tending to facilitate the commerce, England shall reciprocally grant entire favour and an amicable treatment to the flags, subjects, and merchants of the Sublime Porte—who shall hereafter frequent the States of his Britannic Majesty.

6. The tariff of the customs, which was latterly fixed at Constantinople, at the old rate of three per cent. and especially the article which respects internal commerce, shall be constantly observed as they have been regulated. To this England promises to conform.

7. The Ambassador of his Majesty the

King of Great Britain shall fully enjoy the honours enjoyed by other nations at the Sublime Porte; and reciprocally the Ambassadors of the Sublime Porte to the Court of London shall fully enjoy all the honours which shall be granted to the Ambassadors of Great Britain.

8. It shall be permitted to name Schabinders (Consuls) at Malta, and in the States of his Britannic Majesty, wherever it may be necessary to inspect the affairs and interests of the Turkish merchants, and the same treatment and privileges which are allowed to English Consuls residing in the Ottoman States, shall be rigidly observed towards the Schabinders of the Sublime Porte.

9. The English Consuls and Ambassadors shall, according to custom, employ such drogman as they may have occasion for; but as it has been before decreed by common consent, the Sublime Porte will not grant the *berat* of drogman in favour of individuals who do not exercise that function in the place of their destination. It is agreed, conformably to this principle, that henceforward the *berat* shall not be granted to any person of the rank of tradesman or banker, nor to any one who shall keep a shop or manufactory in the public market, or who shall be concerned in affairs of this kind; and he shall not be appointed by the English Consuls from among the subjects of the Sublime Porte.

10. The English patent of protection shall not be granted to any person from among the dependents or merchants, subjects of the Sublime Porte, nor shall there be delivered to them any passport from the Ambassadors or Consuls, without the permission of the Sublime Porte.

11. As it has been at all times forbidden for ships of war to enter the canals of Constantinople, viz. in the Strait of the Dardanelles, or that of the Black Sea, and as that antient rule of the Ottoman Empire must be henceforward observed in time of peace by all Powers whatever, the British Court promise to conform to this principle.

12. The Ratification of this present Treaty of Peace, between the High Contracting Powers, shall be exchanged at Constantinople in the space of ninety-one days from the date of the present Treaty, or sooner if possible.